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NEW TIMES

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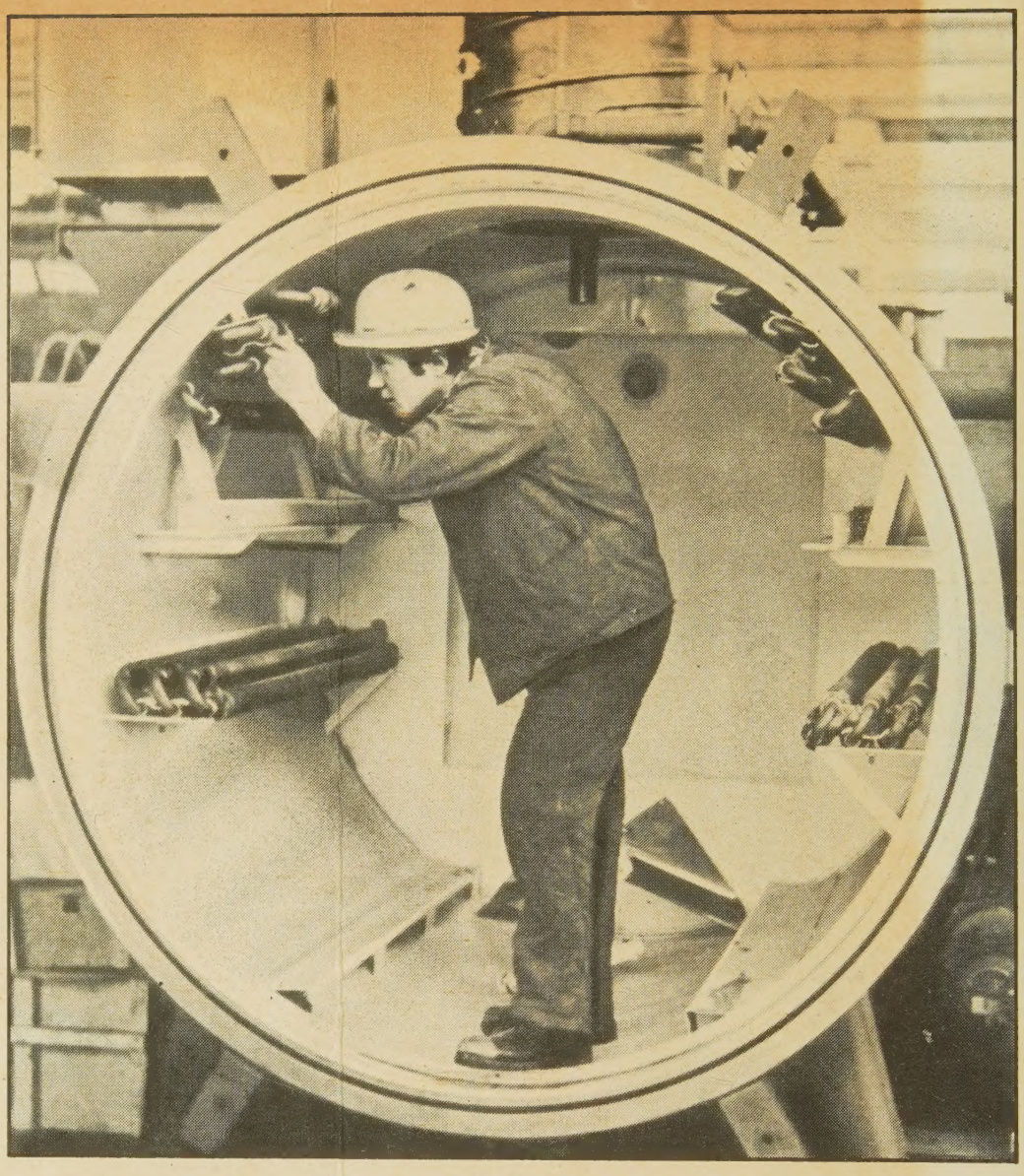
TENTH CONGRESS OF THE POLISH UNITED WORKERS' PARTY

The people of Poland are looking forward to the forthcoming 10th congress of the Polish United Workers' Party. It will consider the important social and economic problems facing the country. The key to the solution of these problems is advanced technology which makes it possible to ensure high quality production all along the line in keeping with the world's top standards.

Poland's growing cooperation with the CMEA countries, and primarily with the Soviet Union, is having a highly beneficial effect on the country's economy. A firm material foundation for Poland's progress is provided by its active participation in the programme of socialist economic integration which allows for making the best use of the advantages of the international division of labour.

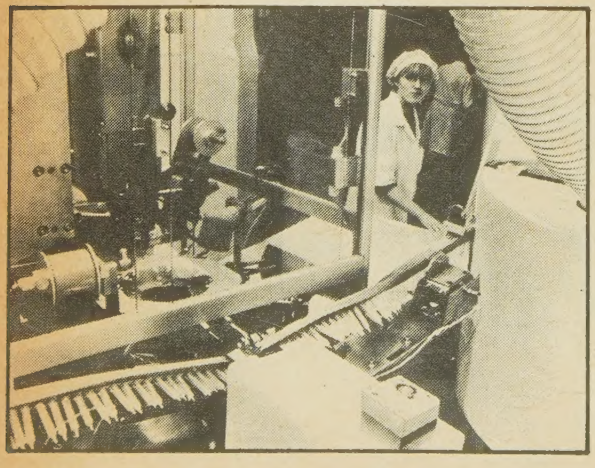


The top photo on this page was taken at a heavy engineering plant in Swiebodzin, a town in Zielona Gora province. An advanced technology enterprise, it specializes in the production of heat treatment furnaces. Its products are not only widely used by Polish industry but are exported to other socialist countries.

The medical instruments put out by the Polfa amalgamation in Boleslawiec are well known to physicians in many countries. Its personnel are now concentrating on raising the quality of their output and developing new and up-to-date technology for hospitals and polyclinics. The specialists of the Boleslawiec amalgamation exchange experience with colleagues in the U.S.S.R., Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and other countries.

In honour of the PUWP congress, the art workers of the Polish capital have given the premiere performance of Chaikovsky's ballet Swan Lake. It was staged by Soviet ballet-masters Konstantin Sergeyev and Natalya Dudinskaya.

TASS photos



CAUSE OF THE ENTIRE PEOPLE

I hail
the magnitude
of our plans,
those seven-league strides
into the future.

Nearly six decades have passed since Mayakovsky wrote these lines. Those initial plans became reality long ago, even though they were "retarded by the brake of poverty," as the poet put it. With seven-league strides the Soviet land entered the highroad of progress. Today it has reached another sharp turning point. Ahead are tasks of great magnitude. To impart an accelerated rhythm to our life and labours, to press on to new heights -- this is the imperative of the time, the strategic postulate of the Party.

Last week the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet adopted the 12th five-year plan. It is discussed in detail elsewhere in this issue. Here we shall merely underscore the hallmark of the new plan -- the breakthrough it calls for in all spheres. To carry it out is to lay the foundation for the success of the economic, political and spiritual restructuring conceived by the Party.

Even our ill-wishers have to concede that the Soviet society is moving forward. Our friends note with satisfaction that the ideas advanced by the 27th Congress of the CPSU are having a salutary effect on all areas of our life. Realistic-minded people in the non-socialist world have once again seen for themselves that our far-reaching plans are inseparably linked with our foreign policy of peace and international co-operation.

Our peaceful plans also have denigrators. Like so many times before, they prophesy the failure of our plans and gloat over the fact that the restructuring is still going slowly and that the transition to new methods is an uphill grind.

No one knows better than we do what difficulties there still are to overcome (this was once again demonstrated by the June Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee). We know what it is that impedes the process of change. We realize that the restructuring can be carried to completion only if the nation puts its shoulder to the wheel.

The 12th five-year plan is gaining momentum. Its first months have seen a rising economic growth rate. The Central Committee of the Party calls on every working man and woman to consolidate and carry forward all that has been achieved, to convert bold plans into the energy of practical action. There is still much work to be done. In the name of the happiness of our country and the future of the entire planet.

FROM OUR MAILBAG

The Italian press is still carrying exaggerated and quite incredible reports about the Chernobyl victims. All sorts of unnecessary "precautionary measures" are being taken: children under 10 are not allowed to eat vegetables and fruit or drink milk. At the same time Italy, whose territory is less than one 70th of that of the Soviet Union, has a host of nuclear power stations, many of which are said to be far from accident-proof. Our press keeps very quiet about all the people who died from drinking wine with a lethal admixture of methanol or about how many die at the hands of the mafia, the camorra and terrorists!

Fiorentino PEAQUIN
Aosta, Italy

I was much moved by the letter from your American reader Paul Linowski published in New Times No. 21 for this year. It is good to know there are people in the U.S. too who care about the future of the planet and look forward to a peaceful future not menaced by nuclear holocaust. This American has realized that he too can contribute to better understanding between our two peoples. Please convey my greetings to Mr Linowski.

Stanislav ARSENYEV
Leningrad region, U.S.S.R.

We Spaniards are exposed to cultural colonialism 24 hours a day. Of a 100 films shown on our screens, 97 are American, one Spanish, one Italian and one French. The songs are sung in English and the films are full of shootings, robberies and violence. The lies we hear over the radio and on TV all bear the same trademark: "Made in the U.S.A."

Miguel Torralba CARRION
Valencia, Spain

NEW TIMES

A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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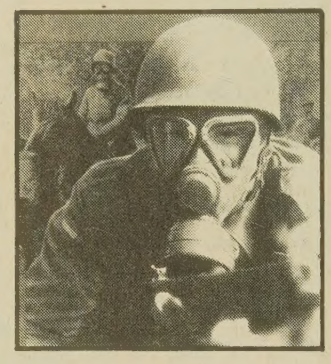
DEVIL'S BREW FOR EUROPE

The principle of binary chemical shells is that a shell is charged with two or more substances each of which is fairly harmless in itself. On the shell's flight to the target the substances blend to form a highly toxic agent. The shell proper acts as a shaker in which the devil's cocktail is mixed.



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MONEY FOR TERRORISTS

Lew Lehrman (second from left), director of the millionaires' Citizens for America club, arranged a gathering of mercenaries from various continents last year. His club is just one of the private big-business organizations in the U.S. which are of great help to Washington in financing subversive counterrevolutionary forces in independent states.

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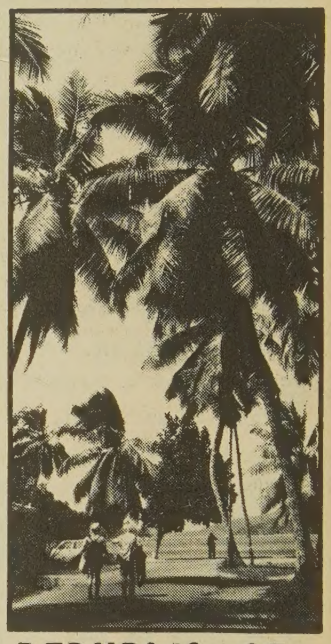

REPUBLIC OF 92 ISLANDS

An ocean casino, that's how the British colony of the Seychelles used to be known. The colonialists were compelled to leave a decade ago. The people of the Seychelles started to build up their national economy, to carry out progressive social reforms, to experiment in the sphere of secondary education. But Western reactionary circles and South African racists continued to conspire against the country, using mercenaries in an attempt to bring the Seychelles back under their control.

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THE RHYTHM OF ACCELERATION

The U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet has adopted the State Plan of Economic and Social Development in 1986-90, thus giving it the force of law.

Below NIKOLAI BARYSHNIKOV, deputy head of a department of the U.S.S.R. State Planning Committee, comments on the new plan.

The new five-year plan is projected at far-reaching qualitative changes in all spheres of the national economy. It is proposed to overcome the slowdown in the economic growth rate that was manifest in the seventies and the early eighties and to ensure the transition of the economy to the highroad of acceleration. This is not a matter of an all-out spurt. The object is to lay by the end of the 12th five-year period a solid foundation for further dynamic advance.

National income is to increase by 124 billion rubles as against 79 billion in the 11th five-year-plan period, and the increase in industrial output (in money terms) is to amount to 200 billion rubles as against 133 billion during the previous five-year plan. The average annual increase in agricultural production is to run to 29 billion rubles as against the present 10 billion.

In order not only to increase the growth rate of social production in 1986-90 but also to lay a solid groundwork for the rapid development of the Soviet economy in subsequent years, it is proposed to increase the share of the accumulation fund in the national income from 25.9 per cent in 1985 to 27.6 per cent in 1990. This will make it possible to increase the growth rate of capital investment in the economy from 15.4 per cent in 1981-85 to 23.6 per cent. In money terms total capital investments will increase by 190 billion rubles, which will open the way to a qualitative restructuring of the material base of both the production and the social spheres.

New Approach to Resources

While accelerating the economic growth rate and the building up of production potential, the country is to tackle also major social problems.

The per capita real income is to increase by 14 per cent (as against 11 per cent during the past five-year-plan period). More food and manufactured goods will be made available, and the service industries expanded. Medical services and education will be raised to a higher plane. It is proposed to build 595 million square metres of housing floor space (43 million square metres more than under the 11th five-year plan) with a simultaneous improvement of quality and the provision of more modern conveniences. Nearly 500 billion rubles, half of all capital investment in the economy, is to be allocated for the material and technical base of the agro-industrial complex, production of consumer goods, construction of social and cultural facilities, and housing and municipal development. In a word, the state is to spend four fifths of the national income on the further improvement of the well-being of the people.

Needless to say, to achieve such high standards a new approach is needed to the motive forces of economic growth. Above all, there has to be a radical turn towards intensification of social production and heightening its efficiency.

It is planned to increase the productivity of social labour in the economy during the five years by 23 per cent, in industry by 25 per cent, and in agriculture and construction by 21 per cent. This is to be done for the first time without drawing on new manpower resources, exclusively through greater efficiency. The existing production potential is to be made more effective by fuller utilization of production capacities and the elimination of internal imbalances. This will make it possible to obtain during the 12th five-year-plan period up to 75 per cent of the increment in industrial output at enterprises already in operation, which are to be retooled and modernized.

Special attention is devoted in the plan to tightening the regime of economy. Economy of resources is to become the main source in meeting the raw material, fuel, energy, and other essential requirements of the national economy. Of the increased basic raw materials and fuel requirements 65-70 per cent will be met from this source. In the machine-building and construction industries the entire increase in the quantity of rolled metal, cement and timber needed is to be met as from 1986 exclusively through economy and reduction of waste. It is proposed considerably to increase the number of secondary raw materials used. In this way a saving of primary raw materials, other materials and fuel to the value of 40 billion rubles could be effected in 1990.

The main lever in the intensification of the economy is acceleration of scientific and technological progress and the attainment of top standards in the productivity and efficiency of labour. The five-year plan calls for a more rapid introduction of basically new technologies. For instance, it is proposed to increase the output of computers 2.4 times over, and, among other things, to produce 1.1 million personal computers. A wide network of automated data-processing facilities is to be created to provide services to millions of workers in diverse branches of the economy. In this five-year period we shall begin to develop a new-generation microelectronic element base that will considerably increase the output of up-to-date microprocessor-controlled equipment. It is planned to make wide use of flexible production systems, industrial robots, and rotor and rotor-conveyer production lines. This will make it possible to raise automation of production to twice the present level.

The tasks, then, are complex and will require the expenditure of no little effort and resources, which are to be concentrated in the key areas. Favourable conditions are being created for wide-scale use of technological innovations and the acceleration of designing. On the whole, spending on science from the state budget and other sources (exclusive of capital investments) is to increase to 33 billion rubles in 1990, as against 24.8 billion in 1985. The rate of growth of this spending exceeds the rate of growth of the national income by half as much again.

Structural Changes

On the eve of the session of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet which adopted the five-year plan, a plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee examined the objectives of the 12th five-year plan from the standpoint of the realization of the strategy of acceleration of the country's social and economic development formulated by the 27th Congress of the Party.

"The main areas of work to give effect to the Party's economic strategy," Mikhail Gorbachev said at the plenary meeting, "we directly associate with the reorientation of our investment and structural policy: with the increase of the share of capital investment in the reconstruction and technical reequipment of existing enterprises, accelerating the development of machine-building, and speeding up the investment cycle."

Under the new five-year plan capital investments in the renewal and replacement of basic assets through the technical reequipment and the restructuring of production are to increase 1.7 times. It is proposed in these five years to

replace obsolete basic assets to the value of 240 billion rubles (2.2 times more than in the past five years) and thereby usher in a new process in our economy—that of substantial rejuvenation of our production facilities.

The technical restructuring of the national economy depends primarily on the technical level of the machine-building industry. For this reason investments in the development of machine-building are to increase under the new five-year plan more than 1.8 times. Expenditure on the retooling and reconstruction of operating plants is to double. The increment in the output of the machine-building industry is set at 43 per cent. In the machine-tool, precision instruments, electrotechnical and electronic industries the headway is to be still more rapid.

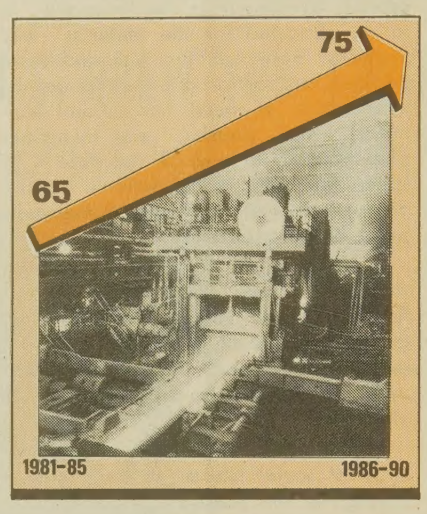
Main attention is devoted not so much to the quantitative as to the qualitative aspect. The annual renewal of engineering output is to be speeded up four times over and is to amount to 13 per cent at the end of the five-year span, as against 3 per cent in 1985. The object is to ensure that by the end of the five-year plan 80 to 95 per cent of the basic products of the engineering industry should be on a par with or superior to world standards.

A feature of the new five-year plan is that it closely links social and economic development with the improvement of the entire system of economic management. The enterprises are to be provided conditions in which the widening of their rights and their greater independence would have as a concomitant full responsibility for the utilization of their production assets, for economic performance, and for the end product.

One out of every three industrial enterprises in our country is already working in accordance with the new methods. Next year the whole of our industry will go over to these methods. The key elements of the new economic mechanism are now being finalized. The underlying principle is full self-financing.

As from next year, self-financing is to be introduced at the enterprises of the chemical machine-building industry, and eventually throughout Soviet industry. The economic mechanism of the agro-industrial complex is being restructured.

INCREASE IN INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT THROUGH BETTER USE OF OPERATING PLANTS (per cent)



Will there be changes in the state plan itself? How is the improvement of the economic mechanism reflected in it?

This is the first plan that sets for enterprises stable guideposts for the full five-year to determine the ratio between the results of labour and the outlay, between the product and the remuneration—the increase in wages for each per cent of additional output, or the ratio of material incentives to each per cent of increase in profits. Every worker has a personal stake in the productivity of his labour, and enterprises are entitled to use their profits for additional remuneration for efficient work.

The purpose of the restructuring of management is to concentrate attention on the basic link in the economy—the production amalgamations, on such hitherto not duly evaluated indicators as productivity of labour, cost of production, profitability, and profit. Yet it is precisely profit that is the basic source of the financial resources of the state. In this five-year period the rate of increase of profit is to be more than double that in the previous five years.

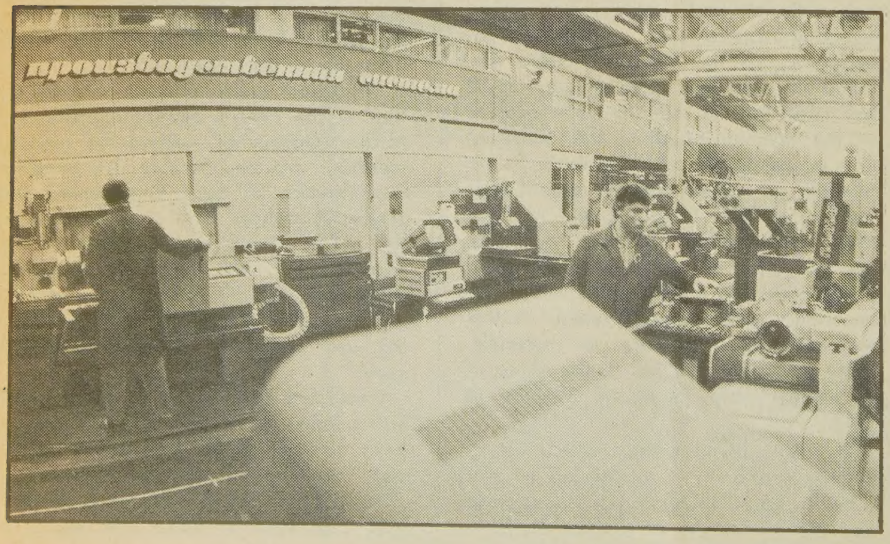
It should be noted that in the recent period the role of five-year plans was underestimated for a variety of reasons, both objective and subjective. Planned targets, instead of being adhered to, were arbitrarily altered. In effect, the economy developed according to annual plans and performance for the five years was judged by the sum of these plans. This practice is to be resolutely discarded. The entire economy and each of its components must have a clear-cut perspective. Especially now when production has to pay for itself and the Party is striving to enlist every worker in active effort for optimum performance on the job.

Our plans are conceived on a grand scale. Their fulfilment requires a high degree of organization and a sense of discipline, the restructuring not only of the system of management but of the civic consciousness of the people. This is how the Party Central Committee poses the question.

Time is pressing.

■

The Planar research and industrial amalgamation in Byelorussia has launched the quantity production of new-generation complexes for flexible automatic systems.
TASS photo



AGREEMENTS MUST BE STRICTLY OBSERVED

On June 20 a meeting of the foreign affairs committees of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet was held in the Kremlin. It examined the situation that has arisen as a result of the U.S. government's actions with regard to the Soviet-American agreements on the limitation of strategic arms.

The meeting adopted the following resolution on the question discussed, the text of which is to be sent to the government and Congress of the United States and also to the parliaments of other countries.

RESOLUTION

adopted by the foreign affairs committees of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet

The foreign affairs committees of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet at their joint session on June 20 considered the situation that has arisen as a result of the U.S. government's actions with regard to the Soviet-American agreements on the limitation of strategic arms.

Having heard in this connection the communications of the ministries of defence and foreign affairs of the U.S.S.R. and the report by the deputies' preparatory group on how the relevant Soviet ministries and departments handle the questions of observance and the monitoring of observance of the above-mentioned Soviet-American agreements, the committees

declare that the U.S. government's decision to discontinue observance of the 1972 Interim Agreement on Certain Measures with Respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (SALT-1) and the 1979 Treaty on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (SALT-2) constitutes a very dangerous step towards disrupting the entire existing regime of arms limitation and undermining the possibilities of concluding in the future far-reaching agreements in this field;

point out that this decision is a direct continuation of the U.S. Administration's generally non-constructive approach to problems of restricting and reducing armaments, which is based on the striving to achieve military superiority;

reject as groundless and ill-intentioned the U.S. Administration's attempts to ascribe violations of the SALT-2 treaty and other Soviet-American agreements to the Soviet Union;

draw the attention of all Soviet ministries and departments concerned to the importance of continuing scrupulous compliance with the provisions, still in force, of the Soviet-American agreements as regards limiting strategic arms as long as the American side complies with them.

The foreign affairs committees of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet express particular concern over the fact that the American side is taking steps leading also to undermining the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Defensive ABM (anti-ballistic missile) Systems. This threatens to destroy completely the only foundation on which strategic stability can rest, and to pave the way for an uncontrollable arms buildup.

To discuss the mutual concern of Soviet and the American parliamentarians about the Soviet-American agreements on the limitation of strategic arms, it is proposed that a working meeting be held shortly between members of the foreign affairs committees of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet and U.S. Congress. Considering the importance of the question of ending nuclear tests, this issue too could be discussed at the proposed meeting.

Such meetings could become regular, and their participants could exchange views both on questions related to the observance of the existing agreements and the elaboration of new agreements.

Mindful of the serious situation that is emerging—a situation fraught with grave consequences for the destinies of peace—the members of the foreign affairs committees of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet urge the members of the corresponding committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress, as well as all other members of the U.S. Congress, to do everything in their power to see to it that the government of the U.S. observes the Soviet-American SALT-1 and SALT-2 agreements and refrains from actions undermining the Treaty on the Limitation of Defensive ABM Systems.

The committees also express the hope that the U.S. government itself will weigh once again all the consequences of its announced intention to renounce the treaties, and will take the decisions that would make it possible to stop the process of mankind's drifting into a nuclear catastrophe.

Proceeding from the premise that an outbreak of a nuclear conflict would constitute a deadly threat not only to the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. but also to all other countries, the committees consider it of utmost importance that the parliamentarians unequivocally voice their determination to remove the danger looming over our planet and oblige their governments to pursue an active policy of peace, disarmament and negotiated settlement of issues in dispute.

The foreign affairs committees of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet, fully aware of the complexity of the present moment, at the same time express the conviction that the peoples of the world are capable of safeguarding peace, terminating the arms race and beginning the establishment of a dependable and comprehensive system of international security. Security for all —the west and the east, the north and the south, countries big and small, irrespective of the religious beliefs, ideological persuasions and political views of their citizens.

(Pravda, June 21)

Conventional But Dangerous

weapons are being acquired by the armies of the NATO countries stationed in Western Europe

Professor RAIR SIMONYAN,
Major General, D.Sc. (Mil.)

At the Budapest Conference of the Political Consultative Committee, the Warsaw Treaty countries put forward a cluster of new peace bids for a secure Europe. Experts estimate that the concentration of troops, arms and combat materiel in Europe is 20 times the average world figure. The socialist countries have repeatedly suggested defusing this powder keg. All these initiatives, however, came up against a solid wall of Western opposition. The Pentagon and NATO are adopting new arms production programmes intended to swell military arsenals many times over. Their purpose remains to gain military superiority over the U.S.S.R. and the other socialist countries. What do they count on?

The Pentagon top brass insist that the armed forces of the United States and its allies should make more effective use of what new technology has to offer, paying special attention to those trends in technological progress which promise definite advantages to the United States.

The NATO countries are developing weapons embodying the latest in modern technology. These are self-homing missiles and other highly accurate projectiles of great destructive power intended to hit important targets deep inside the Warsaw Treaty countries—such as control points and communication centres. Potential targets include those Soviet nuclear facilities which, in the opinion of NATO strategists, are capable of countering a first strike.

The destructive power of the latest conventional weapons is so high that even a non-nuclear war may have fatal consequences for Europe.

NATO's ground forces are equipped with over 400 kinds of conventional weapon. In a magazine article it is impossible to describe them all, so I shall dwell on just a few.

The vacuum bomb. Dropped on Beirut in August 1983 such a bomb wiped out an eight-storey apartment block, killing and wounding nearly 300 people—most of them women and children. The bomb is loaded with substances which, on being released into the air, form explosive fuel-air mixes. This bomb's blast effect and damaging action are now 4 to 6 times (and will eventually be 10-20 times) those of a high-explosive trotyl bomb of the same weight. A simultaneous explosion of several vacuum bombs can cause as much destruction as a nuclear blast, NATO experts claim.

The Sidearm guided anti-tank shell, designed for 155- and 203.2-mm howitzers, has three anti-tank elements. After a shell explodes over a target, each element homes in on it automatically.

The development of new-type ammunition is accompanied by a considerable increase in the artillery firing range (up to 70 km). This means that field artillery can now hit targets deep inside the enemy's first-echelon battle formations—i.e., do what until quite recently only tactical rocket launchers have been capable of.

Electromagnetic cannon are now being developed at an accelerated rate. Shooting out shells at an initial velocity of about 100 km a second, they can be used not only for the effective fulfilment of traditional artillery missions, but also for smashing the warheads of enemy ballistic missiles in any section of their flight trajectory. Pentagon experts claim that at a range of 2,000 km and at a projectile velocity of 10-20 km a second, an electromagnetic gun can ensure higher energy density per unit of area than other coming weapons,

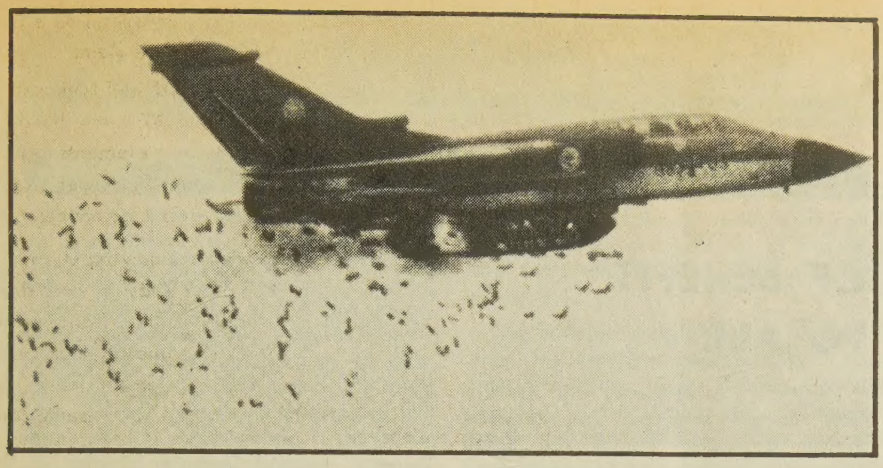
Our own correspondent in Bonn asked two prominent F.R.G. statesmen—Willy Wimmer, a Bundestag deputy for the ruling Christian Democratic Union and member of the Parliamentary Defence Committee, and Lukas Beckmann, member of the Federal Board of the Green Party now in the opposition—to share their impressions of the new peace bids by the Warsaw Treaty countries.

Dialogue Needed

Willy Wimmer is of the opinion that the proposals put forward by the Warsaw Treaty countries should be viewed in the light of the statement the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee made on January 15, 1986. As far as I see it, he said, the leaders of the Warsaw Treaty countries decided—after the general framework of disarmament policy had been established—to make proposals not only addressed to the public but capable of serving as the basis for negotiations. Now that these proposals have been made public, the important thing is whether or not they will be put on the negotiating table in concrete form. In the Soviet Union we should like to see not only "the factor of strength" that it is, but also a state seeking in earnest to join hands with us in tackling difficult problems.

As far as the content of the latest proposals is concerned, I should like to note, first of all, that they centre on conventional weapons. This is in the interests of all those who live in Europe. An interesting and important point is that the proposals apply to the whole of Europe—from the Atlantic to the Urals. Such an approach deserves support. We attach great importance to preventing the appearance in Europe, under any circumstances, of zones differing in the degree of their security. This issue is considered in the course of discussions with the United States, that is, within our alliance. It certainly plays an important role in our relationship with the U.S.S.R. as well.

I am not saying that nothing in the Warsaw Treaty countries' proposals is open to question, but I proceed from



The NATO countries' air forces are adopting the latest combat aircraft—the Tornado. It carries cluster bombs.

such as high-power lasers, and 25-kiloton nuclear ammunition.

In the long run, the U.S. intends to develop **low- and medium-power tactical laser weapons.** Ground-based or airborne, these weapons will be intended to hit air targets and suppress the enemy's optoelectronic facilities. Orbital and ground-based strategic laser weapons for destroying artificial earth satellites, strategic missiles and their warheads are now on the drawing boards. Such weapons can be used for hitting ground targets as well.

The carrying out of the European Defence Initiative project, which is now becoming a major talking point in West European capitals, could cause a new and extremely dangerous arms spiral. The idea is to deploy ultra-modern weapon systems embodying the latest in technology, including those now being developed as part of Washington's SDI.

The combat might of tactical strike aviation is increased through modernizing the aircraft fleet and arming combat planes with guided missiles and bombs of various kinds. The guided air bombs now in USAF service have gliding ranges of 5 to 65 km. The bombs are fitted with television or laser homing heads ensuring a probable error factor (PEF) of 3-10 m. A hollow-cone fougasse penetration warhead capable of piercing a ferroconcrete floor up to 4.5 m thick has been developed for the American GBU-17 aerial bomb.

Close-, medium- and long-range **guided missiles** (20-40 km, 100-180 km and up to 600 km, respectively) are now the standard weapons of tactical aviation. Such a missile has a probable error factor of 5-30 m and weighs 1,600 kilos. Thus equipped, tactical aviation can now score accurate hits at pin-point targets like missile pads, aerodromes, planes under shelter, air defence positions, control stations, bridges, depots, tank concentrations, etc., throughout the enemy troops operational depth.

The new planes adopted by U.S. tactical aviation recently include F-15 all-weather fighter planes and F-16 fighter-bombers. The British, F.R.G. and

the premise that they were prompted by good will. Disarmament negotiations are now in progress in Geneva, Stockholm and Vienna. We are awaiting good news from there. The Budapest programme ought to find its reflection in the stands taken by the representatives of the Warsaw Treaty countries.

Complicated problems are at issue, and I should like to stress in this context the importance of political dialogue between our countries. Moscow ought to conduct them not only with the Social Democratic Party but with representatives of the CDU/CSU as well. After all, we are the strongest party as well as being the party in government. A broader exchange of views would probably enable us, too, to form a more correct assessment of Soviet policies.

Reductions Essential

"I believe that the proposals of the Warsaw Treaty countries for a radical reduction of armed forces and armaments in Europe are a very important addition to the recent peace initiatives of the Soviet Union, above all the stage-by-stage plan for the total elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons by the year 2000," said **Lukas Beckmann.**

"More and more new types of so-called conventional weapons have been appearing in recent years, some of which, for destructive power, differ but little from nuclear weapons. Their use would also lead to colossal casualties, primarily among the civilian population.

"The West European allies of the U.S. are laying ever greater emphasis on the development of conventional arms. The cooperation between Bonn and Paris runs in this direction. The 'revival' of the Western European Union, too, is connected with intensification of the buildup of conventional arms. This is perhaps partly explained by the fact that the peace movement in our countries has concentrated on the fight against nuclear and chemical weapons. Unfortunately less attention is paid to deployment of ever new types of conventional weapons. In my opinion, this is extremely dangerous. The result could be that the chances for real disarmament could be missed. Therefore talks should not only focus on 'traditional' means of mass destruction; the important thing is to get conventional armaments reduced as well. This is the aim of the latest proposals of the Warsaw Treaty states.

"As for the F.R.G. government, it has no position of its own, it is playing the unenviable role of Washington's stooge. This was borne out once again by the recent statement of Defence Minister Manfred Wörner. (Speaking to newsmen on June 11 he accused the Soviet Union of building up conventional weapons without adducing any evidence to back up the charge. This time too the 'Soviet threat' myth was trotted out to justify the Federal Republic's own militarist preparations. It had just been learned that Bonn intends to equip Tornado aircraft with cruise missiles with a range of 600 kilometres.—**Ed.**)

"The peace movement, the Social Democrats and the Greens must exert every effort to ensure that our country displays a readiness for disarmament not in words but in deeds." ■

Italian air forces are acquring Tornado planes, and the French air force the Mirage-2000s with an extra large action radius. This shows that NATO is preparing for full-scale offensive operations rather than for defence, as NATO leaders claim.

A long-range radar reconnaissance and control system is being deployed to increase the efficiency of NATO's tactical aviation. The system comprises eighteen American E-3A (AWACS) planes and eleven British Nimrod aircraft intended for reconnaissance in Warsaw Treaty countries to a depth of 500-600 km.

NATO places special emphasis on the development of reconnaissance-strike complexes combining reconnaissance, control and target suppression facilities. The United States is developing RSCs of two types: PLSS (Precision location strike system) and Assault Breaker. The former is intended chiefly for destroying ground-based air-defence radar stations, and the latter, second-echelon tank groupings.

The RSCs are entirely new systems, both militarily and technologically. NATO leaders expect them to bring conventional arms' combat efficiency up to that of tactical nuclear weapons.

Escalating the race in the latest conventional arms is extremely dangerous. As they grow ever deadlier, conventional arms may tempt war gamblers to make pre-emptive strikes. And new deadly weapons, radiowave, infrasound, genetic and geophysical—may appear. If no obstacle is placed in their way today, tomorrow it may be too late. A continued arms race will inevitably make military confrontation more dangerous and may lead to a situation where even parity will cease to be a military-political deterrent.

In Budapest, the Warsaw Treaty countries put forward their joint proposals for the reduction of armed forces and conventional arms. Their implementation will not offer any unilateral advantages to the Soviet Union and is not only in the interests of our country and its allies and friends but also in those of the U.S., the NATO countries and all nations throughout the world. Today much depends on how seriously NATO takes the Budapest appeal. ■

Photo from Wehrtechnik (F.R.G.)

PANORAMA

KOREAN PENINSULA

OF BENEFIT TO ALL

The Month of solidarity with the Korean people's struggle for the withdrawal of foreign troops from South Korea and the peaceful reunification of the country on a democratic foundation began symptomatically on June 25, the day, 36 years ago, when war broke out on the Korean peninsula. The incendiaries, it will be recalled, were the South Korean puppets of U.S. imperialism. And that date spelled misfortune for the Korean people. On the other hand, July 27, the final day of the Month of solidarity, is something of a symbol of optimism: on that day in 1953 the truce agreement was signed.

At the present time the U.S. is increasing its military presence in the south of the peninsula, turning it into an important missile launching pad on the Asiatic continent, rendering mounting military aid to the Chun Doo Hwan regime, and rehearsing joint action with the armed forces of South Korea and Japan.

The government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, fulfilling the will of the entire Korean people, is working perseveringly for the strengthening of peace on the peninsula and the peaceful reunion of the country. In the recent period alone it has put forward several major initiatives to this end. There is the proposal for the removal of nuclear weapons and the withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea; the proposals to make the Korean peninsula a zone of peace, to end the practice of holding large-scale military exercises in the region and to arrange a dialogue between North and South. And finally, the latest proposal—to hold trilateral negotiations next month with the participation of the Minister of People's Armed Forces of the D.P.R.K., the commander-in-chief of the U.S. armed forces in South Korea and the South Korean National Defence Minister to discuss questions relating to the ending of military manoeuvres and of the build-up of armed forces and armaments on the peninsula, and on strict observance of the truce agreement. Realization of these proposals would help to lower the level of military confrontation on the peninsula and contribute to a peaceful democratic solution of the problem of unification.

Washington and Seoul replied to these proposals by intensifying the campaign of slander against the D.P.R.K. advancing counterproposals of an obstructionist character which leave aside the question of the withdrawal of American troops.

However, the more subterfuges U.S. diplomacy resorts to the more obvious to world opinion becomes the fact that it is the U.S. that is preventing the solution of fundamental national problems of the Korean people. All the greater, then, is the sympathy, understanding and support the D.P.R.K.'s position is winning. And that position is this: only the full and speedy withdrawal of American troops from South Korea can open the way to a settlement of the Korean problem. This is a solution that would benefit all concerned—the Korean people and their neighbours, and all who are interested in stable peace and international security.

E. VASILYEV

SPAIN

SUCCESS FOR THE LEFT

Last Sunday's parliamentary elections in Spain in which more than 70 per cent of the nearly 29 million voters went to the polls, brought no particular political surprises. The fourth general election to the Cortes since the death of Franco in November 1975, it ended, as was expected, with victory for the ruling Socialist Workers' Party (SWP) which retained its absolute majority in both chambers. As figures released by the Ministry of the Interior show (on the basis of 96.6 per cent of the ballot counted to date) more than 8.6 million (44 per cent of the total) voted for the Socialist Workers' Party giving it 184 of the 350 seats in the Congress of Deputies, and enabling it to form a one-party government independent of coalition with other parties.

Compared with the 1982 elections,

however, the SWP lost more than 1.5 million votes and will have eight seats less in the lower house and, according to preliminary figures, 12 less in the Senate. And although SWP leader and Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez said he was perfectly satisfied with the election results, the fact remains that 1.5 million former supporters of the Socialist Party did not vote for it this time—a clear indication of disapproval of its policy. Instead of honouring the promise it gave during the 1982 election campaign to create 800,000 new jobs, the party has steadily pursued a policy of capitalist-style modernization which has led to more layoffs. In foreign policy it regards Spain's entry into the Common Market and the endorsement by referendum of the country's participation in the political organization of NATO as the principal achievements of its government. And Gonzalez has said that the Socialists will continue to steer the same course after the election as well. The main objective, he said, is to proceed with the restructuring of industry and complete the adaptation of Spain to the EEC.

The election programme of the rights and the centrists differed but little from each other. Their leaders did not succeed in overcoming their disagreements and rivalries. The voting showed that they failed to achieve their main purpose—not to allow the Socialists to get the absolute majority.

The bloc of the Popular Alliance, the People's Democratic Party and the Liberal Party obtained only 26.2 per cent of the vote and lost one seat. Some progress was made by the centrist Democratic Social Centre party which won 7 more seats than in the previous parliament.

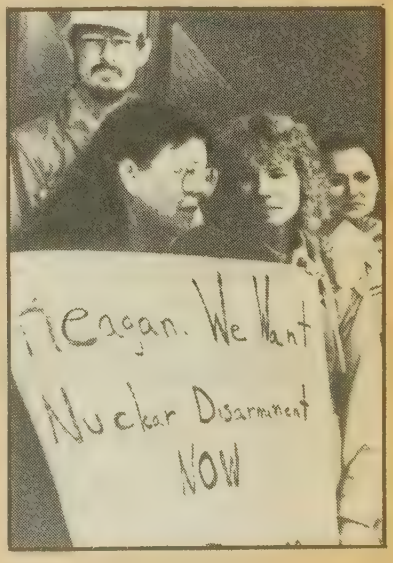
The participation in the elections of the Left-Wing Alliance, formed on the eve of the elections by seven left, democratic parties, including the Spanish Communist Party, and the Spanish Communist People's Party, is unquestionably a victory for the left forces. The establishment of this alliance, which will now have 7 seats in the Congress of Deputies, was not just a temporary expedient. It is of major importance for consolidating all the left forces of the country and activizing their fight for peace and progress. The Alliance advanced a constructive election programme providing for effective measures to combat unemployment which now affects about three million people, and for improving the conditions of the working people. It stands for the withdrawal of Spain from NATO, dismantling of all U.S. bases on Spanish territory and revision of the terms of

BIKE FOR PEACE-86

"We cyclists from Canada, the Soviet Union, the United States and Czechoslovakia have come together to hold an international bicycle run —Bike for Peace-86. We call upon political and public leaders, all governments and peoples to exert every effort to carry out the main task of the International Year of Peace—to safeguard peace and the future of mankind."

The above appeal is signed by 40 participants in the bicycle run who hope to be able enroute to collect the signatures of many political and public personalities. At the finish of the run in New York the appeal will be handed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Similar bicycle runs have been held since 1983. Cycling through the U.S.S.R., Finland, Sweden and Norway and then taking a plane to the United States, Bike for Peace-83 ended on August 6, Hiroshima Day, at the gates of the White House. The route of the present run goes through four countries—the U.S.S.R., Czechoslovakia, Canada and the U.S.A.



Photos: the start of the bicycle run in Kiev on June 22, the 45th anniversary of the outbreak of the Great Patriotic War. The cyclists were seen off, among others, by American tourists who happened to be in the capital of the Ukraine at the time.

TASS photo

Spain's participation in the Common Market.

Elections to the Assembly of Andalucia were held simultaneously with the general Cortes elections. Here too the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party won the absolute majority. A major success was scored by the Left-Wing Alliance which gained 19 seats.

L. ALEXANDROVA

BRITAIN

N. IRELAND ASSEMBLY DISSOLVED

The Northern Ireland Assembly has been dissolved in Belfast on the Thatcher cabinet's decision. Another attempt at reconciling Ulster's two communities has failed.

The Assembly was set up four years ago with the declared aim of promoting dialogue between Protestant Unionists, who demand continued union with Britain, and Catholic Republicans who want Ulster united with Ireland. The leading political parties representing the Northern Ireland Catholics boycotted the Assembly, which London had turned into a forum for Protestant extremists. Whitehall's decision to dissolve the Assembly has put an end to the illusion of political autonomy in Ulster: from now on the Thatcher government will conduct a policy of direct rule with regard to Northern Ireland. This will inevitably bring a new wave of violence. "While interrogators no longer push blindfolded suspects out of hovering helicopters, there is still evidence that extreme methods of interrogation—sensory deprivation, beating, electric-shock treatment and other forms of mental and physical cruelty—continue to be used," to quote the newspaper Guardian.

British troops marched into Ulster seventeen years ago. At the papers' estimate, 2,500 persons—mostly civilians—have died in street clashes and skirmishes since then, and about 30,000 have been wounded and maimed. Crimes are committed in Ulster under the pretext of "enforcing law and order" and fighting the Irish Republican Army (IRA) —the military wing of the Sinn Fein, Ireland's oldest political organization. In the Guardian's opinion, the patriots were compelled to take resolute actions by the British special services and high-ranking army officers who provoked a number of serious incidents in Belfast and other cities. On January 30, 1972, referred to by journalists as Bloody Sunday the First Battalion, Parachute Regiment, opened fire on a civil rights demonstration in Londonderry, killing 14.

Today's Ulster means not only clashes on religious grounds but also a host of unresolved socio-economic problems, both old and new. More than 22 per cent of the total workforce (up to 50 per cent in the Catholic communities) is unemployed.

The British government seeks to perpetuate its rule in Northern Ireland at any cost. A recent step in this direction was the signing of the Anglo-Irish agreement late last year. Margaret Thatcher and Garret Fitzgerald, head of the Irish government, affixed their signatures to it in Hillsborough, near Belfast. The agreement mentions Ireland's consultative say in Ulster's affairs, while the authority of the British cabinet over the province remains complete. The outwardly democratic provision of the agreement to the effect that any changes in the status of the province can be made only with the consent of the majority of the population of Northern Ireland is made meaningless by Ulster's demographic realities: the province is inhabited by half a million Irish Catholics as against a million Protestant descendants of English colonialists who would not hear of breaking with England and reuniting with Ireland. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher herslf unambiguously voiced her support for them when she said that a united Ireland was to be excluded as a possibility and that the government of the United Kingdom remained responsible for administering the territory north of the border.

The real responsibility of the U.K. government is for the bloodshed and the acute problems that have afflicted the province. As Guardian aptly put it, "it is time for the British government to implement a policy of political and military withdrawal from Ireland, to finally renounce its claims over that island to which it has contributed nothing but centuries of suffering and bloodshed."

Y. SAGAIDAK

APPOINTMENTS

Ambassador of the U.S.S.R. to France
YAKOV PETROVICH RYABOV

Yakov Ryabov, Russian, was born on March 24, 1928, in the village of Shishkeyevo, Rusaev district of the Mordovian Autonomous Republic. In 1952 he finished the Urals Polytechnical Institute. He has been a member of the CPSU since 1954. From 1971 he was a member of the Central Committee of the CPSU. He is a Deputy of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet.

Yakov Ryabov began his working career in 1943 as a turret lathe operator. Later he was successively technician-designer, engineer, senior engineer-designer, department chief of the designing office, deputy chief, and then chief of a factory department.

In 1958 he went over to Party work, holding the posts of Secretary of a factory Party Committee, First Secretary of the District Committee, and then of the Sverdlovsk City Committee of the CPSU. In 1966 he was made Second, and from 1971 First Secretary of the Sverdlovsk Regional Committee of the CPSU. From 1976 to 1979 he was Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU.

Between 1979 and 1983 Yakov Ryabov was First Vice-Chairman of the State Planning Committee of the U.S.S.R., and in 1983-84, Chairman of the State Committee for Foreign Economic Ties. In 1984 he became Vice-Chairman of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers.

Yakov Ryabov has been awarded three orders of Lenin, the orders of the Red Banner of Labour and the Badge of Honour, as well as several medals.

Why Sanctions Are Necessary

The aggravation of the situation in South Africa, the introduction of the state of emergency, the escalation of terror against the African majority under cover of rigorous censorship—all this lent special urgency to the World Conference on Sanctions Against Racist South Africa held in Paris from June 16 to 20. Characteristically, the U.S., Britain and the F.R.G. stayed away from this U.N.-sponsored conference. France, Japan, Israel and some other states were represented by observers.

The conference culminated in a call to all nations to apply comprehensive mandatory economic sanctions against Pretoria for the purpose of eradicating apartheid and creating a single democratic South Africa, free of racial discrimination, for the sake of peace throughout Africa. The discussions at the forum centred on the West's persistent vindication of its close links with the government in Pretoria.

Many speakers at the conference formulated a question the Western powers decline to answer: why is it that, while calling sanctions against racist South Africa "ineffectual and inhumane," Washington did not hesitate to use them against Nicaragua, Libya and other countries, nor had London against Argentina during the Falklands conflict?

The West is determined to prove that sanctions will cut both ways, hurting the blacks of South Africa (by damaging the country's economy) and the "frontline states" alike. But all polls conducted in South Africa have revealed that most blacks are demanding resolute action against the racist regime.

As for the "frontline states," their representatives told the Paris forum they did not want their economic vulnerability to be used as a pretext for frustrating sanctions.

Why are the Western powers resorting to specious arguments in their attempts to cover up their obvious reluctance to punish the racists?

South Africa dreads sanctions, and its benefactors are quite unwilling to use this effective tool. After the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee had announced its support for tough economic measures against South Africa, the White House spokesmen said President Reagan still objected to such measures as being out of keeping with American policy objectives. At a recent session of the EEC Council of Ministers in Luxemburg Britain blocked sanctions against Pretoria.

The conference heard some revealing statistics. Since 1980 the West's capital investment in South Africa's economy has doubled to reach $43 billion. More than 350 American companies cooperate with the apartheid regime. British investments top £11 billion. Last year Britain made £5.9 billion on deals with South Africa. So the West does have levers for pressure and might as well use them.

The West, the speakers pointed out, sees in apartheid a system that guarantees it a steady supply of chromium, manganese, platinum, uranium and other strategic raw materials, as well as control over the sea routes off the Cape of Good Hope.

Delegates from the developing countries firmly rejected attempts by South African and Western propaganda to present events in South Africa as a product of East-West confrontation.

"There is no East-West conflict in South Africa," said Abdou Diouf, President of Senegal and chairman of the OAU.

"The Soviet Union is against making southern Africa an arena of political, let alone military, confrontation between the two social systems," said A. Adamishin, head of the Soviet delegation.

Those who oppose sanctions are opting for more violence and continued aggression in the south of Africa. "If [South Africa] comes to the conclusion that it would always remain protected from [effective economic measures]... the descent into violence would be accelerated ... the cost in lives may have to be counted in millions," India's delegate warned. "The Pretoria regime is ready to embark on mindless massacres and massive destruction to remain in power and the only way to prevent such bloodshed is for the international community to impose comprehensive and mandatory sanctions," said Oliver Tambo, the ANC President. This is why the declaration, approved by more than 120 states, pointed out that sanctions are the only peaceful way of putting an end to apartheid.

The delegates said that the conflict in South Africa can only be settled if Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners are released, the ANC and all democratic organizations legalized, the state of emergency lifted, racist laws repealed, and the principle of "one man one vote" proclaimed.

V. KOROCHANTSEV

The Crossroads Tragedy

When he proclaimed a state of emergency on June 12, President Botha of South Africa said the measure was needed to prevent a "communist conspiracy" to incite unrest and disturbances among black Africans. There is indeed unrest among the black population of South Africa but it is due not to some mythical communist conspiracy but to the actions of the guardians of the law. It is police brutality that has given rise to the tense situation which Pretoria used as an excuse for introducing the emergency. This is essentially a long-harboured and thoroughly planned onslaught against anti-racist organizations.

The tragedy at Crossroads is an illustration of how the unrest is provoked. This black township situated not far from Capetown sprang up spontaneously as the result of an influx of Africans from various parts of the country who came here in search of work. Today some 80,000 people live in this wretched shantytown. For its inhabitants, however, the main thing is that it is close to Capetown where many of them work.

Two years ago they were given notice to move to the township of Khayelitsha, where conditions were said to be better. However, the vast majority of the people refused to move, since Khayelitsha was much farther away from Capetown.

The police reacted to the refusal by resorting to brutal repressive action. Those who resisted were branded as rioters, and in the hunt started for the leaders of the resistance the vigilante bands, which include blacks collaborating with the authorities, took an active part. Using firearms, axes and knives, these bands staged a regular massacre in the township killing 60.

One of the leaders of the African National Congress, Tom Sebina, said that the vigilante groups are a strike force created by the authorities to stir up violence in order to give it the appearance of tribal strife.

The introduction of the emergency will undoubtedly give the police a still freer hand in the racist drive to wipe out Crossroads.

N. RESHETNYAK

Contadora: Search, Difficulties, Prospects

VLADIMIR MOREV

Determination to prevent Central America and the Caribbean becoming a zone of military confrontation and to preclude the possibility of U.S. armed interference in the affairs of the countries of the region is growing in Latin American political and public circles.

At first four countries (Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama) formed the Contadora group and later four other countries (Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay) formed the Latin American Contadora support group. Their activity is based on the principle that the crisis in Central America should be settled by political means by the Latin Americans themselves.

A Little History

The Contadora group was set up at a meeting of the foreign ministers of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama on January 8-9, 1983. They had assembled on the Panamanian island of Contadora to review the crisis situation in Central America. In their first statement the participants in the meeting called on the Central American countries—Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua—to renounce the use of force when solving outstanding issues and start peace talks. The inadmissibility of foreign interference in the region's affairs was also pointed out.

Vigorous diplomatic activity by Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama, which became known as the Contadora group, resulted in the convocation of a summit meeting of these states in the Mexican town of Cancun in July 1983. In the Cancun declaration they set forth the Latin American programme for achieving a political settlement. In particular, the declaration provided for a cessation of all hostile actions, a scaling down of the arms race, withdrawal of all foreign military advisers, prohibition of the use of foreign territories to conduct subversive activities, the termination of overt and covert arms deliveries and a ban on the creation of foreign military bases in the region.

In September of the same year, with the assistance of the Contadora group, the foreign ministers of five Central American countries drafted and signed another important document—the Panama pact. It reflected both differing and coinciding views of the parties concerned.

Both documents formed the basis for the draft Act of Peace. Its text was agreed upon by all the interested countries and approved for signing in September 1984. The Central American governments had to respond to the Contadora initiative by October 15, 1984. Nicaragua turned out to be the only country to express readiness to sign the Act of Peace without any amendments or changes.

And what about Washington? The White House was clearly alarmed by the possibility of a peaceful settlement of the regional conflict, did not expect a positive response from the Sandinists and therefore hastened to brand the agreement as "unacceptable." Pressure was put on the rulers of El Salvador and Honduras and they torpedoed the signing of the Act of Peace. They were joined by Costa Rica and somewhat later, though with some reservations, by Guatemala. Using financial and economic levers, the Reagan Administration began to impel the Contadora countries to increase military, political and propaganda pressure on the Sandinists in order to wrest more concessions from them. The White House pursued a dual aim: either to force the Sandinists to accept a document that would suit the United States, or to make the content of the document unacceptable to them and then accuse the Nicaraguan government of refusing to facilitate a peaceful settlement of the conflict. Whatever the case, the group's activities were block-

ed. Yet its members continued to search for ways of working out a comprehensive peace treaty. They succeeded in bringing positions closer on many contested issues. The Latin American Contadora support group, formed in the middle of 1985 and consisting of Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay, began to give important assistance to the Contadora's peace-making efforts.

New Act of Peace

A new version of the Act of Peace was drafted in September 1985 with the assistance of the support group. It took into account some of the demands made by Honduras, Costa Rica and El Salvador. This to some extent altered the spirit of the initial document. Some provisions of the new draft concerning the number of troops and armaments, the setting up of military bases and the holding of military exercises seriously affected Nicaragua's sovereignty and security interests. These changes contradicted the main idea of the agreement—to ensure equal security for all countries in the Central American region.

By the end of 1985 the Contadora process was again virtually paralyzed by the obstructionist stand taken by Washington and its allies. To find a way out, the foreign ministers of the Contadora group and the support group assembled in Caraballeda near the Venezuelan capital of Caracas on January 11-12, 1986. Viewing the Act of Peace as the only means of reaching understanding between Central American countries, the ministers this time defined the mainstays of a "comprehensive political settlement of the conflict." These mainstays provide for a Latin American settlement of the problem, self-determination, non-interference in internal affairs, the territorial integrity of all states, pluralist democracy, non-proliferation of arms, renunciation of military actions and also of political, material or military support for those groups that are trying to overthrow constitutional regimes.

The Reagan Administration's open support for the armed Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries (it is asking Congress to earmark 100 million dollars for them) and its refusal to resume bilateral talks with the Sandinists, broken off by the United States in January 1985, are the main obstacles to the normalization of the situation.

Washington's disregard for the peaceful and constructive initiative of Latin American diplomacy has resulted in its virtual diplomatic isolation on the continent where its anti-Nicaraguan course is supported only by El Salvador, Paraguay and Chile. That is why the White House has had to resort to a number of political and propaganda manoeuvres. In April the President's special envoy Philip Habib toured several Latin American countries. His purpose was to muffle dissatisfaction with Washington's militaristic approach to the problem and to secure support for the aggressive course in respect of Nicaragua.

The Final Stretch

On April 5-7 the foreign ministers of five Central American countries and also of the countries belonging to the Contadora group and the Latin American Contadora support group held a new conference in Panama. They set June 6 as the deadline for the completion of the talks on signing the Act of Peace. Although the final communiqué was in the form of an ultimatum demanding new unilateral concessions from the Sandinists, on April 12 the Nicaraguan government announced its formal consent to signing the Act of Peace within the time set, given that the United States had by then terminated its aggression and agreements had been reached on problems of arms reduction and verification, as well as on military exercises.

Throughout April and May there were meetings and talks to prepare for the concluding conference. Late in May the presidents of Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua gathered in the Guatemalan town of Esquipulas for the first time in the past twenty years to discuss their problems without the participation of the United States. True, even this meeting did not enable them to overcome the existing difficulties, although on the whole it demonstrated the striving of the Central American countries for peace.

The Sandinist government displayed a constructive approach and came up with new initiatives aimed at ensuring a reasonable balance of forces. It proposed, in particular, to stop military exercises in Central America with the participation of foreign states, begin negotiations on the scaling down of the arms race, and remove foreign military bases from the region, as well as advisers. Managua proposed an end to support for irregular armed formations, to the import of arms, and to all subversive activities.

But Washington and its Central American allies saw in Nicaragua's readiness for dialogue a sign of weakness. They increased the pressure and made unacceptable demands for what amounted to virtually unilateral disarmament by Nicaragua, a change in its socio-political system and the opening of talks with the contras by the government.

A document that appeared in May is very indicative of Washington's position. It was prepared by the Pentagon and contends that the signing of the Central American peace treaty will result only in a still greater aggravation of the situation and that in the long term this might even require large-scale U.S. intervention. The main argument is based on the false contention that on signing the agreement the Sandinists will supposedly fail to honour it.

Washington's negative stance and especially the recent extremely anti-Sandinist statements by President Reagan show that his administration is clearly annoyed. It is alarmed by the determin-

CHRONOLOGY OF MEDIATION

● **1983. January.** Panama. Contadora Island. The Contadora group is founded.

● **1983. July.** Cancun, Mexico. The Latin American programme for the political settlement in Central America, known as the Cancun declaration, is adopted.

● **1983. September.** Panama. The Panama pact is signed by the foreign ministers of the Central American states.

● **1984. September.** Honduras, Costa Rica and El Salvador refuse to sign the Act of Peace drawn up by the Contadora group.

● **1985. July.** Lima, Peru. The Latin American Contadora support group is set up.

● **1985. September.** Contadora completes the drafting of a new version of the Act of Peace.

● **1986. January.** Caraballeda, Venezuela. The foreign ministers of the Contadora group and the Latin American Contadora support group hold a conference at which the basic principles of a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict are defined.

● **1986. April.** Panama City, Panama. A conference of the foreign ministers of five Central American countries, the Contadora countries and the Latin American Contadora support group decides to complete negotiations on the signing of the Act of Peace on June 6.

● **1986. May.** Esquipulas, Guatemala, Meeting of the presidents of Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

● **1986. June.** Panama City, Panama, Conference of foreign ministers. Honduras, Costa Rica and El Salvador, at Washington's dictate, torpedo the signing of the new Act of Peace.

ed effort of Latin American diplomacy to achieve a political settlement of the situation, a settlement that would stabilize Nicaragua's international position.

The Search Will Go On

As expected, the meeting of foreign ministers in Panama on June 6 failed to produce concrete results. The Tegucigalpa group (Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica) rejected Nicaragua's constructive proposals and blocked the signing of the agreement. In fact, these countries were pressing for a consolidation of U.S. military presence in the region and demanding that the Sandinists abandon their revolutionary reforms.

On June 7, in Panama, the Contadora group put forward one more compromise variant of the Act of Peace, and the Nicaraguan government declared it was ready for a settlement on the basis of the new plan.

On analyzing the situation the representatives of the Contadora group and the support group sent a joint message to the governments of the Central American countries. They declared they would continue their efforts to draw up the text of an agreement that would be acceptable to all and would "introduce elements of justice and stability" in relations between states.

The Contadora process has yet to reach its end, and this is unsatisfactory. But contrary to what Washington is saying, this does not at all mean a failure of the process of peaceful settlement. The member countries of the Contadora group and the Latin American support group have displayed a sincere interest in averting a U.S. aggression. True, their resistance to the U.S. interventionist course has not always been of a consistent nature. But one must bear in mind that their shared dependence on the United States at times deprived them of freedom of manoeuvre and weakened their influence on the course of events. Neither is the Contadora free of the danger of becoming, in certain circumstances, a tool in the hands of Washington to put pressure on Nicaragua. But notwithstanding all this, by insistently putting forward their own plan to resolve the crisis, the Latin American countries have become a positive factor restricting the possibility of blatant armed intervention by the Reagan Administration.

The activities of the Contadora group can be regarded as a concrete and specific manifestation of the foreign policy independence of the Latin American states. Their struggle to safeguard their national interests has taken on a new collective form and the prospects it opens up offer considerable promise. ■

PEOPLE ON THE WORLD SCENE

SAADIQ el-MAHDI

Saadiq el-Mahdi, the new Prime Minister of Sudan, was born in 1935 in Omdurman and studied economics in Khartoum and at Oxford University (Britain).

Saadiq el-Mahdi appeared on the political scene in 1957. He opposed the dictatorship of General Abboud.

In 1964, Saadiq el-Mahdi became Chairman of the Al Umma Party which represented the interests of the feudal and tribal elite and the bourgeoisie. In 1966-67 he held the post of Prime Minister.

In 1969-71, Saadiq el-Mahdi was repeatedly detained and placed under house arrest as a political opponent of Nimeiri. In 1971 he was banished from Sudan.

In September 1977 Saadiq el-Mahdi returned to Khartoum. Having supported Nimeiri's line of "national conciliation," he became a member of the Central Committee in March 1978 and later a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Sudanese Socialist Union (SSU).

In November 1978 Saadiq el-Mahdi withdrew from the Political Bureau in protest against the Nimeiri regime's support for the Camp David deal, but nevertheless remained on the SSU Central Committee. In September 1983 he was arrested for his disapproval of the enforcement of "Islamic laws." After his release in February 1985 he took an active part in preparing the coup. In April of the same year he joined the National Union of the Sudan Salvation Forces. Saadiq al-Mahdi is married with 10 children.

The decision to convene the Tenth Congress of the PUWP gave a clear and concise assessment of the process of stabilization in the country. It expressed not only a resolve to abide by the Party Rules, but confidence that the necessary political, socio-economic and ideological conditions for this have emerged and that on balance the results of the five-year period since the Ninth, extraordinary, Congress of the Party were positive.

Let us compare the present situation in the country with that which prevailed in July 1981, when the political message contained the workers' watchword, "Yes to socialism, No to its deformation" was substituted by the leaders of Solidarnosc with actions that boiled down to the formula "deformation—yes, socialism—no."

The Ninth Congress took place at a time when strikes in the national economy were declared on the slightest pretext, and often without any pretext, when the counterrevolution openly proclaimed its intentions, and Poland itself was seriously threatened. The aggressive sallies by anti-socialist forces, the demagogic propaganda, the strikes and demonstrations aimed at seizing power at one blow were all designed to end the leading role of the Party in the political system of the country, and to jettison the principles of democratic centralism. Within the Party, too, there were those who proposed coming to terms with the political opponent, which would have been tantamount to complete and unconditional surrender.

Faced with these dangers, the Ninth Congress formulated the political objectives of the PUWP thus: socialist renewal, with a view to uniting all patriotic forces, and readiness to equate defence of socialism with defence of the independence of the country. Subsequent developments confirmed the correctness of these decisions.

Political stabilization, the failure of the attempts to isolate People's Poland in the world arena and the experience gained by the masses in the course of the difficult struggle foiled the schemes of the reaction. People's Poland did not become a European proving ground for the organizers of a total anti-communist crusade. The economy, weakened by the blunders of the 70s, exhausted by the destructive strikes and the sanctions imposed by the West, returned to its normal rhythm. The subsequent restoration of the domestic market, the results of the fight against inflation, and the gradual abolition of ration cards for consumer goods testified graphically to the normalization of the situation in the economy.

True, the economic situation so far does not conclusively guarantee the firm stabilization of public sentiment,

Poland Between Congresses

WLADYSLAW LORANC,
head of ideological department,
Central Committee of Polish United Workers' Party

primarily among the workers. However, the present state of the economy has made it possible to tackle the important problem of return to balanced national economic development. And public attention now centres on the concept of this new stage. Hence the keen interest evinced by different sections of society in the draft of the new Programme of the PUWP. This draft, it will be recalled, was submitted for nationwide discussion. More than two million members of the Party and non-party people took part in the discussion, in the course of which 980,000 PUWP members and 160,000 non-party people voiced their views. These figures speak eloquently of the extraordinary social and political significance of the PUWP Programme.

The draft of the Programme drawn up on the basis of the discussion underscores that in the past 40 years a firm foundation has been laid for the country's sovereignty and security and an end put to its economic backwardness. These are the basic milestones on our road from capitalism to socialism. And although the transition period is not yet over, i.e., the laying of the foundations of socialism has not yet been completed, the social changes are deep enough for the draft Programme to evaluate them as irreversible.

In the course of the discussion the economic part of the draft Programme was elaborated and defined more precisely. It is proposed to increase the country's national income by at least 75 per cent by the year 2000. This objective is to be achieved through the increase of labour productivity by 65 per cent and the reduction of the materials and energy expended per unit of output by 30-40 per cent.

In our annual and five-year economic development plans special attention will be paid to coping with demographic problems (the high growth rate among the non-productive population—minors and pensioners), the solution of the fuel problem connected with the rising cost of extraction of the basic energy sources, and hard currency indebtedness. These problems can be resolved only by heightening the efficiency of the economy. The draft Programme focusses the attention of the whole Polish people on this fundamental task.

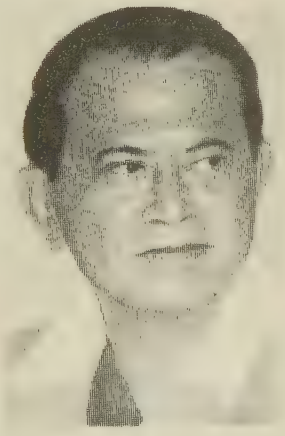
The Party sees its role as the organizer of socialist changes in service to the working class and the people generally, in rallying all the patriotic forces of the country around its Programme aims, in creating the conditions for the security and continued development of the republic.

The nationwide discussion of the draft Programme confirmed that in the eyes of society, of the working class, the PUWP passed the test of the crisis years. We know that the realization of the Programme will require of us effort. We are well aware that now, when the entire socialist community has embarked on the course of accelerated socio-economic development, there is no other road for Poland either.

Experience shows that in the conditions of socialism conformity of the production relations with the productive forces does not come about by itself. Understanding by each member of society of his role in resolving the new tasks is the main precondition of our progress. We know this from the experience not only of the PUWP, but of the fraternal parties as well. The 27th CPSU Congress demonstrated the fruitfulness of an innovatory analysis of reality, and thereby further fortified our faith in the triumph of the common cause. ■

PEOPLE ON THE WORLD SCENE

SALVADOR HIDALGO LAUREL



Salvador Hidalgo Laurel, appointed Vice-President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister in the government formed by President Corazon Aquino of the Philippines, was born in 1928 in Manila into the family of José P. Laurel, a prominent statesman who headed the government of the Philippines between 1943-45, under the Japanese occupation. Salvador Hidalgo Laurel is a graduate of the University of the Philippines and Yale University (U.S.) and holds a doctorate in law.

Salvador Hidalgo Laurel is director of several major building companies, a member of the board of directors of a banking corporation and co-owner of an influential legal practice. He has been active in the country's political life since the sixties, has been elected to the Senate and included in delegations representing the Philippines at a number of international forums.

During the period of the state of emergency (1972-80) Salvador Hidalgo Laurel joined Ferdinand Marcos' ruling party New Society Movement (NSM). In 1978 he was elected to the provisional parliament on the NSM ticket. In the early eighties he went over to the legal anti-Marcos movement and headed the United Nationalist Democratic Organization (UNIDO). In 1982 he became one of the leaders of the Nationalist Party affiliated to the UNIDO as an associate member. The UNIDO, like the NSM, represents the interests of the middle and big national bourgeoisie.

Originally, Salvador Hidalgo Laurel was expected to run for president as an UNIDO nominee at the February 7 elections. However, in view of Corazon Aquino's growing popularity and the Catholic clergy's position, the UNIDO leadership decided to nominate Salvador Hidalgo Laurel as its candidate for Vice-President, and Corazon Aquino, for President.

Salvador Hidalgo Laurel stands for the decentralization of production, the abolition of monopolies, particularly sugar and coconut, minimizing state participation in handling economic development problems, and encouraging private enterprise. In foreign policy, he wants the Philippines to promote relations with all countries while maintaining and strengthening its traditional links with the United States.

Salvador Hidalgo Laurel is married with 8 children.

The U.S. President has reportedly issued a secret directive to send servicemen, spy satellites, and radar aircraft into action against international drug trafficking. Henceforth the Pentagon is to help the American internal services and "friendly" governments combat the narcotics trade. On the face of it the idea is commendable. But it has elicited no applause from the world. Instead, it has raised the question: does the U.S. not intend to use the drug problem as a pretext for the use of armed force? After all, the White House has on more than one occasion accused governments not to its taste of involvement in drug trafficking. The question is all the more warranted considering that the President could clamp down on large-scale heroin and cocaine smuggling operations even without the Pentagon. That is, if "all the President's men" took action against narcotics, which they far from always do.

THE CONTRAS AND COCAINE

The U.S. has been hit by an epidemic of a new drug called crack. American doctors say that roughly half of the serious cases they have to deal with are smokers of crack. Even small doses of it can have calamitous genetic effects.

The brown crystals of crack, which consists 90 per cent of cocaine, have flooded the American black market. Where does the cocaine for it come from? The traces lead, for one, to the Nicaraguan contras, whom the White House qualifies as "the moral equivalent of the founding fathers" and for appropriations for whom it is constantly pressing Congress. Meanwhile the contras, according to ABC television, are making a good thing out of smuggling cocaine from Costa Rica to the U.S. Moreover, without any particular risk. For instance, when two drug dealers, both Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries, were arrested in California and found guilty of smuggling in $100 million worth of cocaine, the federal authorities, in defiance of the court decision, returned to one of the defendants $36,000 of the confiscated money. It turns out that he had presented to the authorities letters from contra high-ups proving that the proceeds from the sale of cocaine were intended for financing operations against Nicaragua. On this plea it is evidently permissible to smuggle narcotics into the U.S. and ruin the health of Americans with the deadly crack.

A month later President Reagan, talking to provincial newspaper and radio editors, laid the blame for drug trafficking on the government of Nicaragua. In other words, shifted the blame from where it belongs to where it does not.

M. OSOKIN

THE ONE AND THE SAME

It might have appeared that the counterrevolutionary bands in Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Angola, and elsewhere are the ones to be helped and the smugglers of narcotics into the U.S. the ones to be fought. Now it turns out that they are all the same lot. In an interview to the San Francisco Chronicle a top official of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) said recently that it was impossible to distinguish between the clandestine drug dealers and the Afghan counterrevolutionaries.

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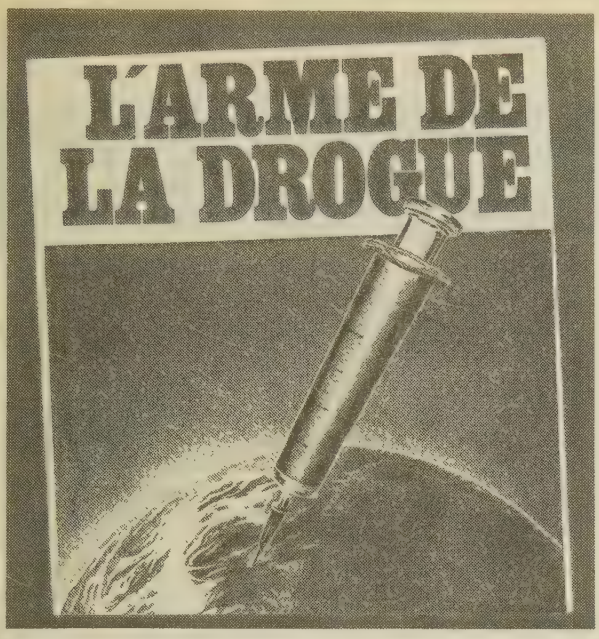
WAS IT EVER TABOO?

"Here is another one," said a heavy-jowled, red-faced man to an audience of a dozen short-cropped toughs, all very much under the weather, in a beer hall of a small Bavarian town. "How many Jews can fit into one Volkswagen?" The disgusting answer was drowned out in a roar of laughter.

This happened last year and would not be worth remembering if it did not have a relevance to a recent article in the Hamburg weekly Die Zeit. "The stock of anti-Semitic tendencies," it said, "is not new, but the shamelessness with which this repertoire is being revived is. The German taboo after Auschwitz appears increasingly to be losing its force." It would be more precise to say that it has worn off, judging by the frank mention made in the Bundestag of an "alarming trend towards anti-Semitism" in the F.R.G., as Free Democrat deputy Hildergard Hamm-Brücher put it. Recently a symptomatic parlour game was put on sale in several F.R.G. states. It consists of a Star of David with the names of nazi concentration camps, including Auschwitz, printed in the points. The player who is the first to send



A French edition of the book "The Drug Weapon" by H. Krüger. The CIA has been patronizing drug-trafficking since the time of the Vietnam war.

declared war against Afghanistan.

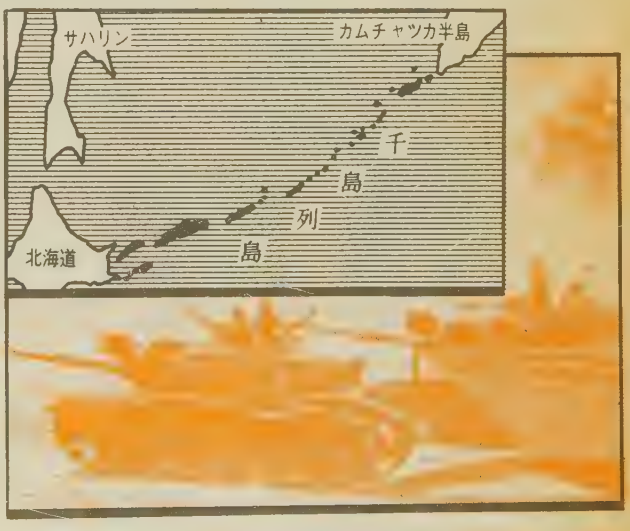
Has the DEA been aware of this all these years! It could deny all knowledge of it by adducing the fact that its control posts in the border zone of Pakistan were withdrawn on the insistence of the CIA. And in Lahore, for instance, DEA men were simply replaced by CIA agents. Thus, the U.S. is formally "fighting" drug traffickers, while actually lending them a hand.

L. YELIN

THE KURILES THE TARGET

The command of the Self-Defence Forces and the American troops on the Japanese islands have other things on their minds than summer holidays. They have a tight schedule. At the end of July "comprehensive exercises in the strategic movement of troops" to Hokkaido are to begin. For August a joint exercise of the Self-Defence Forces and a U.S. naval task force headed by the battleship New Jersey is scheduled. According to the Asahi, the battleship will carry Tomahawk cruise missiles with nuclear warheads. The exercise, the paper says, will be to a large extent a "demonstration of strength in the area of Vladivostok" and will assume a "provocative anti-Soviet character."

What is the purpose of the exercises? The armed forces of the two countries are working on plans for a joint invasion of the Kurile Islands, Sakhalin and the Soviet Maritime Territory, writes Akahata, citing government and military sources in Tokyo. The proposed landing in the Kuriles is included in the programme for a Japanese-American operation "to ensure control" over the northwestern Pacific. A strike at the Soviet Far East proper, General Paul Kelley of the U.S. Marine Corps has admitted, is projected in the event of hostilities breaking out in any part of the world. Who would deliver that strike? In the opinion



American tanks are moving towards Soviet territory, and the Japanese Self-Defence Forces have set their sights on the Kuriles.

Photo and map from Akahata (Japan)

of the Tokyo Strategic Research Centre, either the American and Japanese armies together or the latter independently. Japan, it is reminded from Washington, will have to enter the war simultaneously with the U.S. even if the Japanese islands were not attacked.

In the recent period the area of the U.S. bases on Hokkaido—in close proximity to the Soviet Union—has increased threefold, and Tokyo is moving one army formation after another northward, as if rehearsing a thrust. It looks as if the Year of the Tiger has had too strong an effect on some Tokyo strategists.

L. MLECHIN

Jews to the gas chambers
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im. I rub my hands when
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ttempt to analyze the
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sity professor Fritz Stern

**.G. today Jewish cemeteries
ed, anti-Semitic jokes crack-
, and anti-Semitic slogans
ouse walls again.**

Photo from Stern (F.R.G.)

as saying that it is a matter of "some irresponsible extremist paranoid people." But there are no signs of restraints on them. Even in the Bundestag anti-Semitic mouthings reminiscent of Hitler Germany can be heard. For instance, CSU deputy Hermann Fellner says that the demand presented by Jews to the Flick concern for compensation for forced labour during the war indicates that "the Jews crop up as soon as there is any money in German cash boxes." And the mayor of Korschenbroich Wilderich von Spee publicly suggested "killing a few rich Jews" to balance the municipality's budget.

True, Fellner had to apologize and Spee was compelled to resign. But does this change anything?

N. ZHOLKVER

Chemical weapons present as deadly a danger as nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, despite the numerous proposals of the U.S.S.R. and its allies to eliminate this barbarous means of mass destruction, NATO top bodies have endorsed the plan for the modernization of the American chemical arsenal

Devil's Brew for Europe

Major General ANATOLY KUNTSEVICH,
Corresponding member, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Defence expert

The United States has extracted from its North Atlantic bloc allies a carte blanche to go ahead with the modernization of its chemical arsenal. Dissenting opinions were voiced by Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Greece, Luxemburg and Iceland, but these Washington simply ignored. In effect, a new spiral in the chemical arms buildup has been set off. The enormous three-million-unit U.S. chemical stockpile will soon be increased to five million units. Few have any doubts that the bulk will be stored not on U.S. territory, as the Americans claim, but in the F.R.G., Britain, Italy and Turkey. This would turn the densely populated continent into a potential theatre of a chemical war of annihilation that would take the heaviest toll of the civilian population. For noncombatants have virtually no way of protecting themselves and cannot count on medical aid.

Anatomy of the "Silent Killers"

As the bitter experience of the first world war showed, chemical weapons were highly effective as far back as the beginning of the century. The casualties at that time ran to 1.3 million. With the rapid development in the past 60-70 years of chemistry, biochemistry, biology, pharmacology and medicine, the chemical weapons produced by the U.S. and its allies have reached a completely new qualitative level. What are these weapons like today?

The basic components of the American chemical arsenal are toxic agents, defoliants, chemical ammunition, delivery vehicles and guidance systems.

Modern chemical weapons can contaminate large areas, depending on the type and quantity of toxic agent used, the method employed, the degree of contamination, the weather conditions and the nature of the terrain. The stricken areas can extend to hundreds of square kilometres.

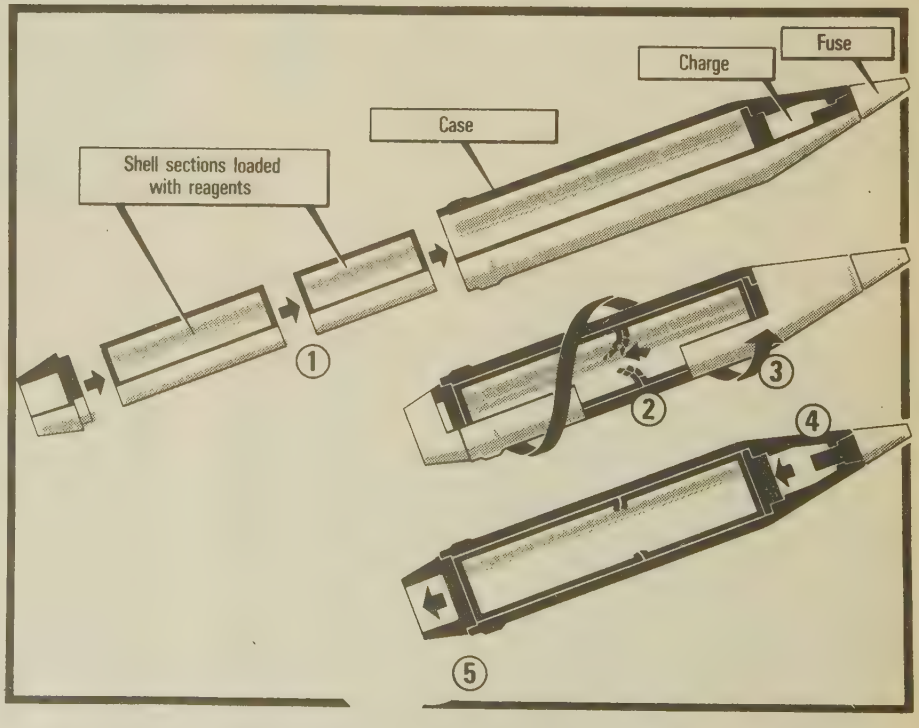
Toxic agents contaminate literally everything: the atmosphere, the soil and all plant and animal life, water sources and food products. The whole environment becomes a lethal trap for human beings. Moreover, as a rule, for a long period of time.

Many toxic agents are impossible to detect by any outward tokens. They are colourless and odourless, which makes it possible to use them in surprise attacks or simultaneously with other types of weapons, thereby greatly complicating defence. Moreover, the multiformity of the contamination of the atmosphere and the ground in some cases rules out medical aid.

How monstrous are the directions scientific thought sometimes takes! To kill a man in 1914 more than 1,000 milligrams of mustard gas were needed. In the 1960s it took 10,000 times less of the American VX gas. And this is not the limit. In the U.S. the search for still more toxic poisons continues.

In a chemical attack the agents have

THE BINARY SHELL



The components of a binary shell load are stored separately before use. Vessels containing both reagents (1) are inserted into the shell before it goes into the breech. On firing, the thin dividing membrane (2) is broken, and a reaction begins. The shell's rotation (15,000 rpm) speeds up the process of mixing (3). Contact with target detonates the charge in the shell head (4) and the explosion forces the deadly mixture out (5).

to be delivered to the target area and used as vapour, aerosol or spray. Chemical rockets, aerial sprayers, chemical aviation bombs, rocket-launchers and artillery shells can be used for this purpose.

The U.S. armed forces already have some 100 different types of such weaponry. But this is not enough for the Washington strategists bent on building up their chemical arsenal still further.

The Binary Weapon

On the initiative of the White House a widescale campaign was mounted in 1982 for the "chemical rearmament" of the U.S. through the introduction of binary systems. Some $10 billion has been allotted for this programme.

Research on binary weapons was begun in the U.S. as far back as 1954, but for quite some time it remained in the background. Prime attention at this time was devoted to reequipping the army with new types of nerve gas. Facilities for their production were created and their stockpiling was stepped up in both the U.S. and Europe.

In the early 1960s U.S. experts returned to the idea of binary weapons. In 1962 the Pentagon drew up a special programme for their development which was given priority alongside other strategic plans.

The principle of binary chemical shells is the following. The shell is charged with two or more substances each of which taken separately could be relatively harmless. In flight to the target the substances combine to produce a highly toxic mixture. The shell acts as a sort of "shaker" in which the devil's cocktail is prepared.

The initial programme provided for binary combinations of VX and sarin. By the end of the 1960s work was completed on binary sarin-GB-2. Later the Americans developed a binary reaction involving the synthesis of VX-2. Much attention was given to the search for binary toxic agents of intermediate volatility. Diverse combinations, including soman (GD-2) were tested. Intensive work is underway on biotoxins, psychotomimetics, and substances for genetic and ethnic chemical weapons. Work on the binary programme is top secret, and one can only conjecture as to the results.

An important stage in the development of binary ammunition is the designing of shells, mines, bombs, nose cones of missiles and other means of delivery. The main object is to ensure the rapid and complete mixing of the components, if possible without the use of devices that complicate the design and reduce the payload. In artillery shells, for instance, the high rate of their spin in flight takes care of the mixing, but in bombs and spray devices special mixers are required.

The first binary projectile commissioned was the 155-mm howitzer shell (M-687) charged with binary sarin (GB-2). At present the finishing touches are being put to the Big Eye aviation bomb charged with binary VX-2. The Pine Bluff plant in Arkansas is ready to begin turning out binary projectiles—artillery shells and aviation bombs. It is planned subsequently to produce them at other plants as well.

Safe Poisons?

The United States has been talking a great deal about the "safety" of the binary chemical weapon. Apart from being false, this propaganda gambit is dangerous.

First, because the components of the binary weapon are by no means as harmless as is claimed. For toxicity some of them are on a par with the "old" poison gases, including those used in the first world war. Of the possible consequences of leakages of components of binary systems one can judge by the tragedy at the plant of a U.S. corporation in the Indian city of Bhopal, where a discharge of a semi-product for use in the manufacture of pesticides killed thousands of people.

Second, the complexity of the design of binary projectiles increases the probability of the malfunctioning of one or another component. As a result, even in storage chemical reactions could occur, causing accidents that could have tragic consequences ranging from injury to the local population to such an accident being mistaken for a hostile chemical attack. In which case hasty "retaliatory" action might be taken.

Third, in the process of combining different components unexpected toxic substances could be evolved against which it would be difficult at once to find means of protection, methods of treatment and even of detection.

Fourth, whereas up-to-date production of sarin, VX and other similar toxic agents requires a highly sophisticated chemical industry and corresponding experience, components of binary systems can be produced at the average state-owned or private chemical plant. This opens the way to the uncontrolled proliferation of chemical weapons and their unsanctioned use, especially in local conflicts. The danger this presents to mankind is immeasurable.

And finally, fifth, the very concept of the binary weapon in effect offers a way to circumvent a possible future convention on control. The binary weapon can be secretly produced at commercial plants in various countries supposedly for peaceful purposes, for which openings are offered by transnational corporations. Besides, the binary programme makes it possible secretly to station components of binary projectiles on the territory of allied countries in the guise of smoke or some other kinds of shells, without even seeking their consent.

Cruise missiles, Pershings, chemical weapons.... Isn't it a bit too much for NATO's European zone?

Binary chemical weapons clearly present a particular danger to densely populated Europe. Nevertheless, Washington has invited its European NATO allies to its "cocktail party," and the latter did not venture to refuse. Yet the deployment of this weapon in Western Europe will mean that if another war broke out on the continent it would inevitably be also a chemical war. The decision as to whether it would be chemical or not would depend not on the Europeans but on the American generals. The casualties among the civilian population would be enormous.

According to the estimates of Western experts, the use of the chemical stockpiles stationed in the F.R.G. alone would affect no less than 100 million people in Western Europe—more than the population of the F.R.G., Belgium, Denmark and Holland taken together. One can only marvel at the shortsightedness of the policy pursued by the present leaders of the European NATO countries who have opened the way to the production of the latest, more

dangerous types of chemical weapons.

It is indicative that the U.S. Administration put through the decision to begin the production of the binary weapon just when the success of the Geneva talks on the total prohibition and abolition of chemical weapons appeared to have become a practical possibility as a result of the latest major Soviet initiatives set forth by Mikhail Gorbachev in his statement of January 15 this year and concretized by the Soviet delegation at the Geneva disarmament conference on April 22.

The new Soviet initiatives contained a concrete timetable for the elimination of stockpiles of chemical weapons, notification of the location of the plants producing them, and the beginning of their dismantling. Provision was made for international on-the-spot verification of all major operations of this kind. The Soviet Union also proposed the elaboration of the necessary verification measures to rule out the production of chemical weapons at commercial enterprises. This would make it impossible to set up secret arsenals of chemical weapons.

Thus, the Soviet Union advocates and takes practical steps towards the early conclusion of a convention on banning chemical weapons, destroying all stockpiles of these weapons and dismantling all facilities for their production, with a view to ridding humanity once and for all of the "silent killers." This policy was once again confirmed by the recent statement of the Soviet government which in strong terms condemned plans for the chemical rearmament of NATO. The U.S.S.R. considers it its duty, the statement said, "once more to draw the attention of the governments of the United States and the other North Atlantic countries, of all European countries, to the exceptional danger with which these plans are fraught for the cause of peace in Europe and throughout the world. The peoples must say no to the binary and all other chemical weapons."

■

Lapse of Memory

April 22, 1915 was a warm, sunny day. In the afternoon a moderate north wind rose from the direction of the German positions. The French reservists and the Algerian troops who had dug in around the Belgian village of Langemarck, near Ypres, thought it was a good omen, all the more so since the German artillery had fallen silent and quiet prevailed over the front lines.

At 5 p.m. three red rockets soared up into the sky. Ypres and the neighbouring villages came under an artillery barrage. Soon the allied soldiers saw a greenish-yellow cloud rise over the enemy positions and begin to drift towards them with the wind. Meanwhile, in their concrete trenches with sand-bag parapets German soldiers opened the taps of 6,000 cylinders containing liquid chlorine. With a hiss the liquid turned into a cloud of gas.

Thus, the book "A Higher Form of Killing" published in Britain describes the first combat use of the chemical weapon. In that initial attack more than 5,000 died and some 10,000 suffered grave injury.

Ypres became the symbol of chemical barbarity, just as Hiroshima and Nagasaki were to symbolize the nuclear. Not long ago the name of the small Belgian town was again in the news. On May 7. some German 77-mm shells loaded with phosgene and mustard gas exploded at a nearby army proving ground. Four Belgian army engineers were killed and a fifth was wounded.

Two weeks later the NATO defence ministers met in the Belgian capital. Most of them endorsed the beginning in the U.S. of the production of a new-generation chemical weapon—the binary. The Belgian Defence Minister was among them.

The American plans for producing binary weapons were barely discussed in Belgian political quarters, on the plea that it was America's internal affair and Belgium had nothing to do with it. Many other West European leaders take the same stand, although, as the International Herald Tribune observed, "silence on the production issue today will send their nations down the slippery slope towards deployment in their backyards tomorrow." In Brussels the debate has been confined to whether the binary weapons should be deployed in Belgium or not.

Speaking in parliament on April 30, the Belgian Defence Minister François-Xavier de Donnéa said that the siting or storing of chemical weapons in the country was out of the question. But two weeks later the Belgian government retreated from that position. Inasmuch as this happened immediately after de Donnéa's visit to Washington, many local press commentators and political observers believe

During World War I chemical weapons took a casualty toll of 1,300,000.

An American chemical depot in Fischbach. Today the F.R.G. stocks enough chemical weapons to poison 100 million Europeans.

that the change of course was due to Washington pressure. Government leaders said they did not exclude the appearance of chemical weapons on Belgian territory "in the event of a crisis," maintaining, however, that this could not happen without the consent of Brussels.

On June 4 the chemical weapons issue was debated in parliament. The deputies of the ruling parties put through by majority vote a motion calling on the country's leadership "to make it clear to the NATO partners that under no circumstances is our country prepared to site binary systems or any other chemical weapons, or to equip its armed forces with them." This at first glance seemingly unambiguous refusal to become involved in the new round of the arms race, however, was cancelled out by an amendment stipulating that the government must "respect the provisions of the Constitution." Translated from the diplomatic into ordinary language, this means that in the event of a conflict the government, in conformity with Article 68 of the Constitution, is empowered to act as it sees fit. And since the country's leadership has clearly stated that "in the event of crisis" it does not exclude the deployment of binary weapons on its territory, the conclusion is obvious.

The leader of the parliamentary group of the Flemish Socialists Louis Tobback has called the motion a mockery of both parliament and the public. The fact is that the Belgian politicians' attempt to reconcile the "goat and the cabbage patch," as a local paper put it, did not alter the main thing: Brussels has endorsed the U.S. plans for the production of binary weapons and left a loophole for their deployment in Belgium.

As distinct from Brussels, the neighbouring Hague did not yield to U.S. pressure. It said an unequivocal no to the new generation of chemical weapons, stressing, among other things, that their appearance would have a negative effect on East-West relations and primarily on peace negotiations.

Talking to newsmen on May 22 in Brussels after the NATO Defence Planning Committee meeting, the Netherlands Defence Minister Jacob de Ruiter publicly dissociated himself from Pentagon chief Caspar Weinberger, who said that the allies had endorsed the U.S. binary plans by "consensus." "This," de Ruiter said, "is a typical instance of a half-truth: some countries, including the Netherlands, clearly declared that under no circumstances can they approve of the deployment of this new type of chemical weapon." Together with his Norwegian and Danish colleagues, the Dutch Defence Minister asked Weinberger to bring their objections to the knowledge of the U.S. Congress. The Hague is farther away from Ypres than Brussels, but judging by everything, the lesson of the chemical Hiroshima has been assimilated there better than in the Belgian capital.

V. BOIKOV
Trud correspondent, exclusive for New Times

Brussels

Behind the Back of the People

West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl came home from Tokyo with a much publicized "gift" for the people of his country. At long last the citizens of the Federal Republic could breathe easy: in a matter of a mere six years the U.S. chemical weapons capable of poisoning practically the entire population of Europe would be removed from the territory of the F.R.G. Kohl had agreed on this with U.S. President Reagan at the May meeting of the Big Seven in Tokyo.

But there was a catch in the "gift." Under the same agreement, the U.S.A. in the event of a "crisis situation" (the precise definition of which would naturally be given by the Americans) would have the right to site in the F.R.G. an even more sinister chemical weapon—the binary. True, this could be done only with the consent of Bonn. The ruling parties are trying to present the Tokyo deal as "a political success" for the Chancellor. But how does the opposition appraise it? I put this question to Hermann Scheer, the head of the Social Democratic group in the Bundestag subcommittee on disarmament and arms control.

"The chemical projectiles that have been stored for years on our territory have deteriorated to the point where they present a danger not only to service personnel but to the population at large," he replied. "They must be removed as soon as possible. But at the same time there must be guarantees that under no circumstances will the useless projectiles be replaced by new ones. This is one of the objectives of the proposal for the creation of a chemical weapon-free zone in the centre of Europe which the Social Democratic Party advanced jointly with the Socialist Unity Party of Germany. The Communist Party of

Czechoslovakia joined in this proposal. Realization of this initiative would be an important step towards ridding humanity of the chemical threat. As regards the Kohl-Reagan agreement, it in effect set off a new round in the chemical weapons buildup."

Bonn, then, is assuming a grave responsibility for the consequences!

"More than that," Scheer said. "Bonn is playing the key role here. As you know, in December last year the U.S. Congress passed a resolution making the beginning of the production of binary weapons dependent on the consent of the United States' European NATO allies. After all, these weapons are intended for use on our continent. Thus, the West Europeans were given a say in deciding whether the binary weapons would be produced or not. Had the Bonn government refused to give its consent, it is hard to imagine that our European allies would take a different stand."

How would the production of binary weapons affect progress at the Geneva disarmament conference!

"The experts say—and their opinion has to be taken seriously—that it would greatly complicate the already difficult problem of control. For the binary weapon consists of two components each of which is relatively 'harmless.' They can be stored in different places, a fact which in itself would make control extremely difficult. Another circumstance to be borne in mind is that with the binary charges placed at their disposal, the military will offer even stiffer resistance to chemical disarmament."

In January 1987 there will be a general election in the F.R.G. If the Social Democrats win, what action will the government headed by them take!

"It will immediately sign an agreement with the G.D.R. and Czechoslovakia on the creation in Central Europe of a zone free from chemical weapons, and denounce the chemical weapons agreements concluded by the present government."

After the above interview with Scheer, the Süddeutsche Zeitung carried an item about Bavarian TV having reported that the U.S. was planning to station 460,000 (sic) binary charges in the Federal Republic. In addition, 28,000 binary aviation bombs will be stored in Britain. At the present time American storage facilities in the F.R.G. have "only" 100,000 chemical shells. According to information obtained by Bavarian TV from U.S. Senate sources, the idea of leaving the decision on starting the production of binary weapons to NATO bodies originated with a "high-placed F.R.G. politician." This politician had reportedly also said that binary weapons could very well be sited in the F.R.G. provided this is kept secret from the population. Who is this unnamed politician? Bavarian TV reminded listeners of the trip made last year to the U.S. by CDU/CSU floor leader Alfred Dregger.

A. TOLPEGIN
Our Own Correspondent
Bonn

Illustrations are taken from Frankfurter Rundschau, Der Spiegel and Vorwärts (F.R.G.)

Immediately after the first world war Soviet Russia declared for the total prohibition of chemical weapons and their elimination under strict international control. In 1928 the U.S.S.R. became one of the first countries to ratify the Geneva protocol of 1925 for the prohibition of the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous and other gases, and of bacteriological methods of warfare. To date the protocol has been acceded to by 105 countries, including the United States, though the latter procrastinated for fifty years.

1969. The U.S.S.R. and its allies submitted to the United Nations a draft of an international convention on the prohibition of the development, production, accumulation and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons. The West agreed to renounce the use of only bacteriological means of mass destruction. A corresponding convention on bacteriological weapons was signed in 1972 and entered into force in 1975.

1972. Together with other socialist countries the U.S.S.R. submitted to the Geneva disarmament committee (now conference) a draft convention providing for the total prohibition of all chemical weapons. The proposal remains in force to this day.

1976. On the initiative of the U.S.S.R. bilateral talks opened with the U.S. on chemical disarmament. Washington unilaterally broke off these talks in 1980.

1982. The U.S.S.R. submitted to the U.N. a draft of the basic principles of a convention on the banning of the development, manufacture and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction.

1984. The Warsaw Treaty states proposed to the members of NATO an exchange of views on ridding Europe of chemical weapons. The U.S.S.R. also supported the initiative of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (G.D.R.) and the Social Democratic Party of Germany (F.R.G.) for the creation in Europe of a zone free from chemical weapons.

January 15, 1986. A statement made by Mikhail Gorbachev once again declares for the total elimination of these weapons as well as of the industrial facilities for their production without delay. The Soviet Union is ready for timely notification of the locations of plants producing chemical weapons and to terminate their manufacture, to embark on the elaboration of procedures for the dismantling of their production base and to begin the elimination of stockpiles of chemical weapons soon after the entry into force of a relevant convention.

April 22, 1986. The Soviet delegation at the Geneva disarmament conference details Mikhail Gorbachev's proposals and puts forward a wide range of initiatives relating to this problem.

May 30, 1986. The Soviet government issues a statement that once again confirms its readiness to do everything necessary for the achievement of a mutually acceptable and effectively verifiable agreement on the prohibition and total elimination of chemical weapons.

June 11, 1986. The Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty states again firmly declares against the further buildup of chemical weapons arsenals and calls on the NATO countries to renounce plans for the production and deployment in Europe of a particularly dangerous type of these weapons—the binary. The Warsaw Treaty countries hold that the elimination by the end of the century of chemical means of mass destruction as well as of the industrial base for their production is one of the main areas on which joint efforts should be concentrated with a view to putting an end to the arms race.

Tapping the Wealth of the White Tiger

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam was proclaimed on July 2, 1976. The victory over the American aggressors in the spring of 1975 paved the way for socialist change in the south of the country. The problems and plans of Vietnamese oilmen, who are tapping the natural resources of the country, are described in a report by a Soviet journalist.

An elderly man on the highway through Ben Tre Province in the Mekong delta raised his arm, looking hopefully at our car. We knew that only an emergency would make a Vietnamese, naturally modest and shy of unnecessarily bothering guests visiting his country, ask a foreigner for help, so we stopped. The man's name was Nam. He was a worker from Ho Chi Minh City. On his day off he had set out to see his parents in the countryside but run out of fuel with 20 km to go to his home village, and there was no car or truck on the road to help him out. He needed just a couple of litres of petrol; his father had enough fuel stored up for the return journey.

Motorists' solidarity knows no frontiers.

"We have fuel shortages in Vietnam," Nam told us, putting the petrol in his tank. "Petrol for private motorists is strictly rationed. Yet we hope to have our own oil pretty soon: Vietsovpetro is about to launch offshore drilling projects."

The country today meets virtually all its needs in liquid fuel from imports and that is why great hopes are pinned on a joint Vietnamese-Soviet project to prospect for and develop offshore oil and gas fields in the south of Vietnam; the project is known by the abbreviation Vietsovpetro.

Our helicopter shook slightly with strain, took off and, rising into the air, headed for the sea. We had a marvellous view of Vung Tau and its harbour a hundred-odd kilometres from Ho Chi Minh City. Vung Tau is known in Vietnam as a coastal resort. Sprawling at the tip of the cape of the same name, the resort once was a haven for Saigon millionaires and senior officials of the Thieu regime. Hotels and numerous villas still line the sandy beach.

"Vung Tau" means "quiet haven." Yet the town has never been quiet. Before 1975, its noisy bars, casinos and restaurants were open until the small hours. They were frequented by the wealthy, who battened on the war against their own people, and by GIs on leave from punitive operations in the jungle. But even at that time the magic word "oil" sent tremors through Vung Tau, exciting businessmen and the owners of giant corporations.

Offshore oil exploration was started by American and Canadian companies in 1973. The Thieu government granted them concessions. They were shortly joined by the French Aquitaine and Compagnie Française des Pétroles, Kaiyo Oil of Japan, and the newly established Pecten Vietnam, controlled by Shell. Pecten Vietnam announced in August 1974 that oil had been struck at a site it co-owned with the American Cities Service Oil Company. In February of the following year a new well, drilled more than a hundred kilometres offshore, as Saigon newspapers reported, "yielded in three-hour trials as much as 2,400 barrels in per day terms." President Thieu himself went out to the drilling rig. But the days of his government were already numbered. It collapsed in April, offshore exploration stopped and the oil companies withdrew to their bases in Singapore.

In early 1976, the Far Eastern Economic Review, well versed in the affairs of the region, wrote: "It is no secret now that the Americans are extremely interested in the Vietnamese oil—for which, it is said, they stayed on in Saigon as long as they did." It is a slight exaggeration, of course, but American companies certainly pinned great hopes on Vietnamese oil. After people's rule had been established over the entire territory of Vietnam, some American companies approached Hanoi for offshore oil concessions. Similar offers were made by other Western and Japanese companies but the Vietnamese government chose the Soviet Union as its chief partner in the new project.

Our adversaries used Hanoi's choice as a pretext to allege "Vietnam's dependence on Moscow." But the real reasons for the decision were very different.

"We closely studied the modus operandi of Western oil companies," the chief of the main oil and gas board of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Nguyen Hoa, told me. "We realized that, having secured a concession in any country, they only chase profits. The owner of the oil field does not get anything except a share of the oil output. But our goal is to develop a new industry, so we are trying to look ahead. That was why an agreement was signed in 1981 on the establishment of Vietsovpetro. Today it is a major project of economic cooperation between our countries."

I recalled that conversation as I looked down from the helicopter at the panoramic view of Vung Tau spread out below.

We were airborne for about 40 minutes when the islets of the drilling rigs rose from the bluish haze of the sea ahead. The helicopter touched down on a special platform, resembling the outstretched palm of a giant. The drilling rig had just been swept by a tropical downpour and looked remarkably clean and fresh. The impressive

These Soviet oilmen are members of a team prospecting the White Tiger deposit.

Photo by author

structure stood on three piles sunk into the sea bottom. When the job is done, the rig pulls up its piles and floats freely, ready to be towed to another site.

"The chief purpose of the rig is to prospect for offshore oil and gas," drilling foreman Vladimir Saikov told me. "We have aboard everything we need to do the job. We use rotating crews, which operate the rig for a fortnight and spend the next fortnight on shore. We have mixed Soviet-Vietnamese crews."

The recorder was drawing a sophisticated graph on the tape and green and red signals were blinking on the panel. The rig's chief geologist, Vladimir Gerchikov, was sending a report to the control post.

"We are now prospecting the White Tiger oil field," he told me when he

had finished. "It is in this field that Vietsovpetro struck its first oil in the summer of 1984. Our job is to determine some additional characteristics of the deposit needed for its commercial operation. The geological conditions here are complex: the White Tiger lives up to its name."

The two Vladimirs, Saikov and Gerchikov, knew each other well from joint offshore work at Sakhalin. Saikov became an offshore oilman after graduating from a technical secondary school and Gerchikov worked in the Sea of Okhotsk.

"Take a look," Vladimir Gerchikov pointed to another artificial island a few hundred yards from our rig. "It is a fixed rig and pretty soon it will produce the first Vietnamese oil."

I watched the supports of future platforms being assembled at Vung Tau the next day. The structures, as tall as a high-rise building and weighing 1,300 tons each, towered over the construction site, dwarfing everyone.

"The project is technologically unique," Vietsovpetro's chief engineer, Grigory Pury, told me.

Engineers and technicians have to cope with the many complex problems that crop up. The construction of the first platform was badly behind schedule for a number of reasons, but the second one was put together five times faster. This means that adequate experience has already been gained.

A great deal of construction and assembly work has been done in the past two years. The port, which receives freight from the Soviet Union, has been expanded and the first stage of the shore base completed. Vietsovpetro is not only engaged in oil prospecting and extraction in the narrow sense of the word: a new industry is being developed in Socialist Vietnam. An advanced petrochemical plant will soon be launched a few miles from the "island-making factory." Personnel for the new industry are being trained at technical secondary schools and institutes in the Soviet Union. The Azerbaijan Oil and Chemistry Institute in Baku trains more oil experts for Vietnam than any other educational establishment so it is small wonder that Baku and Vung Tau have been twinned.

A young lad with a welding hand screen in his hand climbed down from the future support of the oil platform. I talked with Tre Dinh Thang in Russian: he had graduated from a vocational training school in Tashkent.

"I have been working in Vung Tau since 1984," Thang told me. "I volunteered for the job because I understood how badly Vietnam needs oil today. It will help us speed up our industrialization programme, advance the economy and improve living standards."

Another worker was listening.

"Meet my fellow-worker Nguyen Manh Hung, a first-class welder," Thang introduced him.

"It may sound conceited but I consider myself a veteran of Soviet-Vietnamese construction projects," Hung said somewhat shyly. "I learned the trade during the construction of the Thac Ba hydropower station, then worked on the construction of a cement plant and the Pha Lai thermal power station. It was Soviet comrades who taught me the secrets of the trade."

His account was backed up by Ngo Thuong Shan, Vietsovpetro's deputy chief geologist, who graduated from the Moscow Geological Prospecting Institute in 1962.

"It was far from easy to find a way to the treasures of the White Tiger," he said. "Virtually no papers survived from earlier surveys and Western companies guard their secrets closely. But the joint efforts of the two countries demonstrated anew the great potential of socialist integration. We still have problems, of course, and any new venture is bound to have difficulties. Vietsovpetro is tackling many tasks, including problems of environmental protection. Vung Tau still is a popular resort, and now houses sanatoria and rest homes for workers."

The names of the offshore oil fields—the White Tiger, the Dragon and so on—sound like echoes of old legends. The republic's Premier Pham Van Dong once compared Vietnamese oil to a sleeping enchantress. Soviet and Vietnamese oilmen from Vietsovpetro, recently awarded the Order of Labour, First Class, by the Vietnamese government, have awakened the enchantress to a new life.

E. LENG

Vung Tau—Ho Chi Minh City—Moscow

The very name of the event, the first of its kind, is meaningful. It expresses the desire of all the athletes and coaches and all those who will come to the Soviet Union in July to demonstrate their adherence to peace and cooperation among nations. The Goodwill Games is the contribution of sportsmen and the sporting community to the International Year of Peace proclaimed by the U.N.

On August 6, 1985, the day the Soviet Union's unilateral moratorium on nuclear weapons tests came into effect, the day of the 40th anniversary of the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, a satellite TV bridge linked Moscow and New York. The aim of the space bridge was to relay a press conference of noted Soviet and American athletes, coaches and sport officials who "met" in this way at the very moment when an agreement was being signed at Moscow's Ostankino TV studios on the holding of Goodwill Games in the U.S.S.R. in 1986 and the U.S.A. in 1990. The co-sponsors of the Games are the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Physical Culture and Sport and the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Radio and Television and, on the American side, the TBS network which also represents the interests of the national athletic federations in the U.S.A.

The Games were initially conceived as a competition of the leading athletes from the two countries. The last encounter between Soviet and American athletes took place 10 years ago at the Montreal Olympics. It was subsequently decided to expand the Goodwill Games by allowing top athletes and world-class teams from other countries to take part. Invitations have been accepted by athletes from more than 60 countries on all continents.

The idea of the Games could not have come at a more suitable time. Competitions organized by the two great powers are vivid proof that we can and should work together for the good of mankind. The Games are meant to demonstrate the harmony that can exist between nations in spite of all the differences.

The Olympic charter says that sport should foster in young people a spirit of mutual understanding and friendship and contribute to the creation of a better and calmer world. Sport is a goodwill ambassador and sporting contacts are a factor for peace. We in the Soviet Union have always kept this in mind.

In 1952, when Soviet athletes made their debut in Olympic events, Philip Noel-Baker, one of the leaders of the international sports movement and a Nobel Peace Prize winner, said that Russians were true Olympians. To the Russians, competition is first and foremost a way towards greater mutual understanding, and this spirit of their performance cannot elude you. He believed, he said, that their joining the Olympic family marked a qualitatively new stage in the history of the Games.

The names of such stars as Yuri Vlasov, Valery Popenchenko, Lydia Skoblikova, Vladislav Tretyak and

Many of the world's top athletes are on their way to Moscow, Tallinn and Jurmala in the U.S.S.R. where a major international event is to get under way on July 4

Goodwill Games

MARAT GRAMOV, Chairman of the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Physical Culture and Sports, President of the U.S.S.R. Olympic Committee

Ludmila Pakhomova are known all over the world. Millions of people remember them not only for their sporting achievements but also for their friendly and sportsmanlike behaviour.

Newsmen once asked me: "Would it be true to say that the Goodwill Games are little Olympics?" I replied that they are neither little nor big Olympics and that it was wrong to oppose the one to the other.

Nor can the Goodwill Games conflict with the Olympics organizationally, because they are being held in the middle of the Olympic cycle. The philosophy of the Goodwill Games, as we understand it, makes them akin to the ideas of the Olympic movement. For this new major event sets itself the aim not only of producing sporting results but of serving the cause of peace.

We have repeatedly declared our unfailing support for the Olympic movement which has acquired so much social significance. Some people would like to see divergences between the sponsors of the Goodwill Games and the International Olympic Committee. In this connection I would like to cite the statement made by IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch in an interview with the Italian weekly Sabato: "The International Olympic Committee supports the idea of the Goodwill Games soon to be held in Moscow and, in four years' time, in the U.S.A. I do not think these Games pose any threat to the Olympic Games. On the contrary, the IOC is in favour of any encounter that serves the ideals of sport. We believe that the Goodwill Games will make an important contribution to the spread of the Olympic philosophy."

Some people stubbornly insist on the allegedly commercial character of the Games. There is no truth whatever in these claims. We do not pursue any commercial aims, and our expenses are far in excess of any income that might be gained. We provide all the participants, judges and guests with lodging, food and transport, shoulder the cost of the contests and the sport facilities required. We shall pay the travelling expenses for many participants.

We plan to hold the Games as events involving top athletes and teams. Many of them have received personal invitations so as to ensure a high level of competition at the Games as a whole. Accordingly, we have had to limit the number of participants (6-8 teams in the team game, for example).

We have done much advance publicity for the Games: there have been press conferences in which famous Soviet and American champions and record-holders took an active part. Since December last year they have toured the U.S.A., Canada, Japan, Australia and Europe. The Soviet sports community was represented by Victor Saneyev, Ludmila Bragina, Alexander Dityatin, Natalia Linichuk, Anatoly Beloglazov, Soslan Andiyev and ex-world champions Galina Tsaryova and Irina Moiseyeva.

Our famous Victor Saneyev visited American sporting centres and schools and was a guest of the U.S. Congress. Before returning home, he and some American athletes were received by Vice-President Bush.

The programme of the Games is big. Athletes will compete in 17 sports at famous Olympic arenas in Moscow. Jurmala (Latvia) will host tennis players, Vidnoye near Moscow, motor ball competitions, and in Tallinn the Olympic sailing centre will organize yachting events.

The opening ceremony will be held at the Central Lenin Stadium on July 5, but the actual events will begin the day before with swimming contests at the Olympic Sport Complex.

We expect the Games to be attended by about 3,000 Soviet and foreign athletes. The biggest national contingents will be from the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., with more than 500 people each.

We shall see the cream of world track-and-field athletics in which all the Olympic events will be represented. Many Olympic champions, world and continental champions are to take part in wrestling, diving and weight-lifting. Gymnastics and rhythmic gymnastics, as well as men's and women's volleyball tournaments, will feature the best teams in the world. Water polo and basketball (men's teams are currently contesting the world title in Spain) will be among the highlights of the Games.

Some of the world's top cyclists will compete on the bicycle track in Krylatskoye. The modern pentathlon tournament promises to be interesting.

We expect to accredit about 850 Soviet and foreign journalists to the Games. A special radio and television complex has been set up in Ostankino and a special international television programme is being prepared. A total of 130 hours will be allotted for transmissions to the U.S.A. The events are expected to be watched by about 80 million American families as well as TV viewers in other countries. All told, the Games will be seen by over 1,500 million people.

The Games are evoking great interest. Among the guests of honour will be many prominent members of the international sports and Olympic movement. Intourist has made hotel bookings for visitors from the U.S.A., F.R.G., Britain, Japan and other countries who are coming specially to see the Games.

It is hoped that the Goodwill Games will be a milestone in world sports. They will reaffirm the deep meaning of the words spoken by Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic movement: "Oh sport, thou art peace!"

Money for Killers

Anti-Afghan lobby in the United States

EVGENY KISELYOV

A large group of the Afghan counterrevolutionary chieftains was received in the White House on June 16 by President Reagan himself who assured them that Washington would go on supplying them with money and weapons. Since 1980 U.S. government support for the counterrevolutionary bands has run to 1.5 billion dollars.

Not content with this, U.S. reactionary circles are enlisting private organizations and individuals as sources of extra funds for the anti-popular gangs. The activities of such organizations are examined below.

A Counterrevolutionary Foundation

Recently the weekly New Republic carried a report on a network of private organizations linked with the White House which give support to reactionary groupings operating in various countries across the world. Over the past few years, the weekly says, they have stepped up fund-raising campaigns in aid of the bandits' combat training and to buy weapons and ammunition for "a new generation of America's allies in the Third World." The pillars of these organizations include such influential right-wing Republican leaders as the beer king Joseph Coors, William Simon, the one-time U.S. Treasury Secretary, and other founding fathers of, and the biggest contributors to, the Heritage Foundation. This think tank advises the U.S. Administration and Congress on how, as the extreme right see it, key foreign and home policy problems should be dealt with. It was this think tank that put forward the basic ideas of neoglobalism. In particular, it urged the Administration to intensify subversive activities against "unfriendly" Afghanistan and supply Stinger missiles to the counterrevolutionaries. As a result, the White House decided to let the bands have two hundred such missiles.

The Heritage Foundation fosters the ever more numerous private organizations that cover up large-scale U.S. official interference in Afghanistan's and other countries' internal affairs. The mushrooming of such organizations demonstrates the eagerness of Big Business to join in the undeclared wars being waged against regimes that are not to the monopolies' liking. The Heritage Foundation is becoming, to an increasing extent, the coordinator of the nongovernmental anti-Afghan organizations in the United States. Here are a few examples to illustrate this.

The seminar on Afghanistan—a propaganda show in support of the counterrevolution—held in Washington last January was attended, in particular, by representatives from the Federation for American-Afghan Action. They repeated the recommendations contained in the Heritage Foundation's bulletin entitled Backgrounder. As if quoting from the bulletin, they demanded that Pakistan be still more actively used as a springboard for the anti-Afghan war, that the latest weapons be supplied to the counterrevolutionaries and—the observers took special note of this immediately—that weapons be regularly airlifted from the U.S. to rebels in Southwest Asia. The Committee for a Free Afghanistan, which is perhaps the best-known anti-Afghan organization in the United States, in fact operates under the Heritage Foundation's roof—it has its headquarters in the elegant building owned by the Foundation on Massachusetts Avenue, Washington.

Let's Be Personal

Associated with the said committee are many legislators, State Department officials and senior Pentagon personnel. Take, for instance, Charles Lichtenstein, a former U.S. Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations notorious for his rabid anti-Sovietism. He was the main speaker at the provocative "meeting in defence of Afghan children" held in front of the Capitol. Charles Wilson and Gordon Humphrey stand out among the Congressmen active on the committee. According to the Washington Post, Representative Charles Wilson of Texas has initiated the broadening of clandestine support for the Afghan bandits through CIA channels and has recently had allocations for the delivery of the Oerlicon anti-aircraft guns to them endorsed.

Republican Senator Gordon Humphrey (New Hampshire) has been involved in pushing through the legislature all the anti-Afghan bills enacted over the last two years. The Congress has allocated $500,000 to the training of the counterrevolutionaries in the techniques and methods of "propaganda warfare." To

General Singlaub. The latest conference of the World Anti-Communist League, held in Dallas, was keynoted by neoglobalism.

Photo from Der Spiegel (F.R.G.)

call a spade a spade, this money was spent on fabricated "documentaries" and TV stories about "brutalities" by Afghan and Soviet troops and counterrevolutionary "victories" which were never won. The operation proceeded as follows. First, the Heritage Foundation urged stepped-up psychological war against Afghanistan. Then Gordon Humphrey pushed through the allocation bill. And now several organizations —the Committee for a Free Afghanistan among them—are to be commissioned to train TV saboteurs from among the Afghan counterrevolutionaries. A substantial cut of the 500,000-dollar take will line the pockets of persons on the committee.

Lobbyism is known to be a lucrative business in the United States. Congressmen themselves and those who have them vote for this or that bill receive handsome rewards from the interested parties. "Freedom fighters" are not averse to bribing legislators either. It has transpired that the UNITA anti-Angolan grouping earmarks $600,000 a year for lobbying. Was it not in payment for their benefactors' services that the Afghan counterrevolutionary chieftains spent the substantial proportion of the American aid described by the Washington Post as inexplicably missing?

As already mentioned, the weekly New Republic reported on money raising campaigns in aid of the anti-government forces. Furthermore, a representative of the Committee for a Free Afghanistan informed the January seminar about a collection of private donations for the counterrevolutionaries. Although less is known about the private financing of the counterrevolutionaries than about the CIA's aid to them, they do get money from private sources.

It should be made clear, however, that the division of the funds made available to the anti-Afghan mercenaries into two categories (CIA injections and private donations) is largely arbitrary. In an article about clandestine arms deliveries to the counterrevolutionaries the magazine Newsweek wrote that although there may be "private arms deals" the CIA formally has nothing to do with, the agency is always involved in them nevertheless. After all, such deals require mediators, figureheads, forged passports, etc.—things, in short, that only the CIA can provide.

Another Web

General John Singlaub (Ret.) heads the World Anti-Communist League (WACL)—a union of odious individuals and organizations that include fascist, neofascist and anti-Semitic groupings, as well as SS veterans' organizations. Suffice it to say that dictator Stroessner of Paraguay is the WACL's honorary life chairman.

General Singlaub is also the head of the League's U.S. branch—the American Council for World Freedom financed by American conservatives—Joseph Coors, in particular. It is Singlaub who, according to the New Republic, controls the network of private organizations that support the Afghan counterrevolutionaries.

In the spring of 1985 he was referred to as the instigator of a fund-raising campaign for the Nicaraguan contras. The NBC television company reported that he had succeeded in raising $10 million for them in the U.S. and as much in other countries. Shortly afterwards, Singlaub turned his attention to the Afghan counterrevolutionaries.

The situation in the anti-government movement in Afghanistan was high on the agenda of the WACL's annual conference in Dallas (September 1985). Seated on the platform on Singlaub's right was a representative of the Afghan "freedom fighters" clad in Ranger camouflage dress. After the conference Singlaub told newsmen that the League planned to raise more funds for "anti-communist insurgents" not only in Central America but in other countries as well, Afghanistan first and foremost.

The web of anti-Afghan intrigue spun by Singlaub spreads far beyond the confines of the United States. Our issue No. 3 for this year carried a story about the exposure and detention in India of the businessman Rama Swarup who had been engaged in espionage. It was through his "business office" that the Afghan counterrevolutionary emigrants in Delhi were financed from the outside. Swarup distributed anti-Afghan materials of his own fabrication passing them off as originating from Indian public opinion. It is worthy of special note that on the eve of his arrest Swarup had taken part in the Dallas gathering as President of the Indian branch of the Asia-Pacific Anti-Communist League affiliated with the WACL. Shortly afterwards Singlaub staged another anti-Afghan show: at a ceremony held on the Capitol itself, the American Council for World Freedom conferred the title of the "best freedom fighter of 1985" on terrorist Wali Khan. In 1985 he took another counterrevolutionary "general," Rahmatullah Safi, on a U.S. tour the programme of which included get-togethers with politicians, news conferences and another "seminar" on Afghanistan. In San Francisco Afghan terrorists were even presented with the keys of the city. The purpose of the tour was to secure more arms supplies and private donations for counterrevolutionaries. The tour's sponsors were once again the Committee for a Free Afghanistan and another right-wing group—the Reserve Officers Association, with which ex-General Singlaub is also connected.

Neither Journalists Nor Doctors

The WACL's Dallas conference was attended by representatives from the magazine Soldier of Fortune whose editorial office is in fact the headquarters of the U.S. "dogs of war." Robert Brown, the magazine's editor, took part in armed attacks on

Drawing by N. Shcherbakov

democratic Afghanistan from Pakistani territory, as evidenced by photographs which later appeared in the magazine. Brown recruits instructors for the Afghan terrorists. He has established the Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund, which solicits the public for contributions intended, as its ads bluntly put it, for the pro-Western Afghan resistance groups.

The institute of international and regional studies is—hardly by coincidence—right next door to the Soldier of Fortune editorial office in Boulder, Colorado. The institute is headed by Colonel Alexander McCall (Ret.). Its respectable façade is a cover for one of the U.S. largest private schools for training terrorists, Afghan included.

A group of American doctors formed allegedly to render medical aid to Afghanistan styles itself the International Medical Corps, an innocent-sounding title. In fact the group caters not to

Afghanistan but to the Afghan counterrevolutionaries, and does not confine itself to medical aid. In mid-1985, for instance, the corps helped organize a propaganda tour of the U.S. by a certain Zia Massoud whom the agency UPI described as the chief link between Afghan anti-government groups and the West.

Charles Thornton, a correspondent for the Arizona Republic (U.S.), died in Afghanistan in September 1985. He had sneaked in from Pakistan in the company of a photographer and two International Medical Corps men, John Moughan and Judd Jensen. The Voice of America said that the latter two had joined an Afghanistan-bound counter-revolutionary group in Pakistan in order to study "the state of medical service in the ranks of the resistance movement." Near Kandahar, the bandits skirmished with a rival gang, and Thornton was killed. The government troops who appeared on the scene found diaries and numerous photographs which showed the "doctors" of the International Medical Corps helping load ammunition onto a truck and teaching bandits to launch ground-to-ground and ground-to-air missiles. Most importantly, it was proved beyond any doubt that the Americans were among the terrorists who had shot down an Afghan passenger plane with 52 people on board on September 4, 1985. One of the "doctors" had even filmed the outrage.

Ideological Short Circuit

Lew Lehrman, the leader of the grouping calling itself Citizens for America, avers that the American support for the anti-communist organizations gives expression to the sentiment of the overwhelming majority of the American people. He is the self-same Lehrman who arranged a rally of Afghan, Angolan, Nicaraguan and Laotian rebels in a UNITA camp last year.

Lew Lehrman and his organization have very little to do with the majority of American citizens, however. Citizens for America is a magnates' club, the leading group of right-wing Republicans. Lehrman himself is head of the Rite Aid pharmaceutical empire. In 1982 he ran for the state governorship without success but Newsweek expects him to try his luck at the next presidential election. Furthermore, Lehrman is a member of the Heritage Foundation.

Admittedly, there are people in America (and in Western Europe) who sincerely believe that Coors, Singlaub, Lehrman and the like really work for the cause of free Afghanistan. So let us take a closer look at them.

General John Singlaub worked his way up in the military intelligence service. He was in command of task forces during the Vietnam war. The press described him as "a recognized expert in unconventional methods of warfare."

Alexander McCall, the director of the international and regional studies institute, was in charge of special operations in Vietnam.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Brown (Ret.), editor of the magazine Soldier of Fortune, headed a top-secret CIA group in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

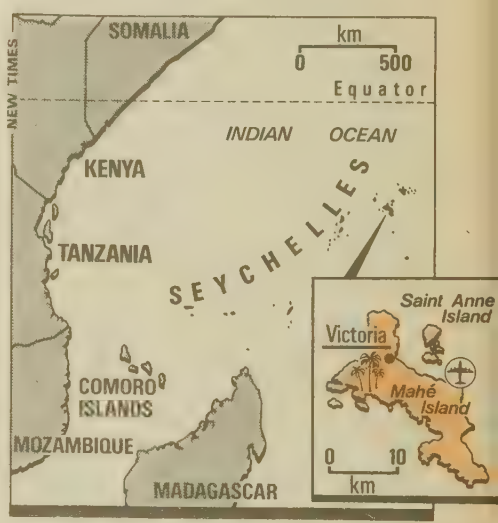
Andrew Eiva, executive director of the Federation for American-Afghan Action, also served in task forces.

Karen McKay, executive director of the Committee for a Free Afghanistan and a major in reserve, is an expert saboteur. I wonder if those who were so moved by her speech at a "meeting in defence of Afghan children" knew about her background? Did they know that Karen McKay, who mourned the "tragic fate of Afghan children," had accompanied Wali Khan on his U.S. tour shortly before and voiced her eager support for his demand that the counter-revolutionaries be given the latest missiles? It was with such a missile that the terrorists later shot down a plane near Kandahar whose passengers included children.

Writing in the newspaper Dagens Nyheter, Professor Göran Terborn aptly called the stand taken by certain Western intellectuals who side with the Afghan counterrevolutionaries "an ideological short circuit." Those who are naive enough to believe in the good intentions of the various "committees," "associations" and "foundations" that support the "Afghan fighters" should know that behind these fronts there lurk former Green Berets, mercenaries, and other accomplices in the bloody crimes of the American military, whose consciences have never been troubled by the Vietnam syndrome. ■

Britain, which ruled the Seychelles for more than a century and a half, had to grant it independence when popular anger threatened to erupt into rebellion. To forestall such a development, London resorted to a favourite colonialist trick and handed power over to its stooges headed by President Mancham. But he did not last long. A year later the British puppet was toppled and power taken over by the Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF) which headed the national liberation struggle. The Front's leader, France Albert René, became the President of the young republic.

The popular government did not hesitate in choosing the direction in



which the republic would develop. President René thus defined it in one of his speeches:

"There are two beliefs in the world. There are some who believe that money is a most important thing in a society. There are others who believe that it is people who are the most important. This is a reason why the modern world is divided into two camps—one socialist, the other capitalist. We Seychellois prefer the socialist system. Our choice is clear and we have never tried to hide it. We also believe that every people has the right to choose the system it wants to and that no other country should interfere with that choice."

The imperialists, however, think otherwise. In 1981 they conspired with the South African authorities in an attempt to overthrow the René government. Pretoria put together a group of mercenaries headed by the notorious adventurer, Michael Hoare.

They were exposed as soon as they disembarked from a plane in the airport of Victoria, the capital of the Sey-

Republic of 92 Islands

chelles, and were given such a rebuff that they barely managed to get away by hijacking an Indian plane that happened to be on the airfield. The setback did not prevent the imperialists and their agents from continuing their attempts to destabilize the situation in the Seychelles.

Not by Tourism Alone

The republic occupies 92 islands in the western part of the Indian ocean. Their total area is 405 sq km but they are scattered over a vast expanse of almost a million sq km. One can easily imagine how difficult it is to govern such a country, to tackle its economic and social problems and overcome the legacy of colonialism.

Foreign tourism has always been, and still is, Seychelles' economic trump card. The wonderful sandy beaches, the mild climate and the abundance of sunshine gave the colonialists, when they ruled the archipelago, the idea of turning the main island of Mahé into a holiday paradise for the rich. Tourists are still attracted by the pristine beauty of the islands, the popular legends about their piratic past and tales of treasures that can supposedly be found by just digging in the sand. As for the Seychellois themselves, they are looking for ways to develop their economy rather than for mythical treasures.

The people at the Planning Ministry gave me a copy of the national development plan for 1985-89. One cannot but be struck by the ambitious targets it sets; for example, to create 11,000 new jobs (with a total population of 65,000), to improve the balance of payments, and speed the growth of the economy in which the tourist industry is still the single most important factor. Last year there was one tourist for every inhabitant of the islands. By 1989 the number of tourists is to increase by a third. A glowing prospect. However, the people here feel that it is high time to tackle the problem of making the country self-sufficient in food. How to go about it? The plan envisages the expansion of government-owned and cooperative farms, the introduction of scientific methods in agriculture and livestock breeding and the development of fishing. To copra and cinnamon, the Seychelles traditional export commodities, vegetables and flowers will apparently be added. The government intends to invest more in the productive sectors than in preceding years, about 40 per cent of budget allocations. Government control of foreign trade will help meet the target.

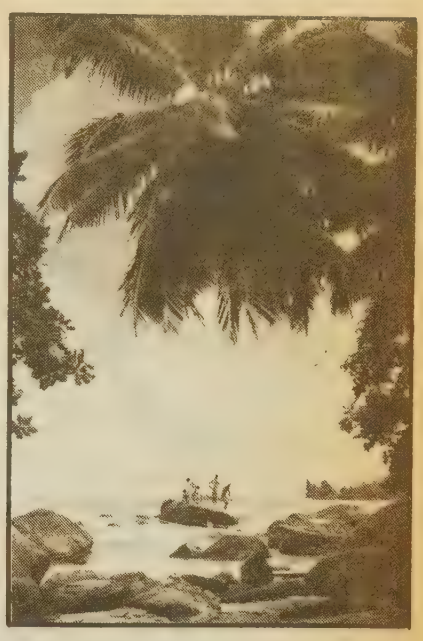
I talked to Michael Memee, secretary of the National Workers' Union, about the social reforms carried out in the archipelago. He mentions the setting of a minimum wage and the creation of a pension fund and the free medical service (with no charges for drugs on prescription). The government also underwrites the bill for secondary education. Under the plan, all the citizens will be provided with a dwelling within the next five years.

Education Through Work

The young republic is conducting an experiment in the field of secondary education that has attracted interest from many developing countries. The underlying principle of the National Youth Service set up in 1980-81 is President René's idea that education should not be confined to teaching young people to read and write. They should be taught how to live in the community and tackle vital problems together. After nine years of school, adolescents continue their education in youth camps where they learn to be builders, fishermen, ship's mechanics and electricians. The new scheme initially ran into a good deal of opposition, especially among the wealthier strata of the population. So the government made this post-school training completely voluntary. The result? At present nine out of ten adolescents are studying in the four "youth villages."

The movement's enthusiastic leader, Ralph Adam, is secretary of the Progressive Front for youth and sport affairs and director of the National Youth Service.

"They spend two years in the youth



camp," he told me. "The first year includes general education disciplines plus the rudiments of agriculture, building and medicine. In the second year the student specializes in one of the four areas: agriculture and fisheries, building, the humanities, and the exact sciences. For those who have not made up their mind about specialization we offer a general course. Those with the highest grades are promoted to study at the polytechnical college, the country's main institution of higher learning. To all the others we try to offer work in keeping with their individual aptitudes and inclinations."

In the biggest "youth village" on St. Anne Island, 750 students live in fourteen communities. They are completely self-sufficient: they grow fruit and vegetables, run small livestock farms, do their own cooking, washing and cleaning up.

The National Youth Service is the nucleus of the Youth League which is being formed in the country. Says Jilles Lionnet, the secretary of the national committee:

"We consider ourselves to be the reserve of the ruling party. So we teach the young people to see things from their social angle. We also foster collectivism and concern for the national destiny in our republic. We are moulding a new man."

Many entries in my notebook deal with Soviet-Seychelles cooperation. Let me begin with the local heavy industry. A group of Soviet builders on Mahé Island are helping the locals master Soviet technology, notably that used in expanding the capital's sea port. A

powerful stone crusher has been assembled. The U.S.S.R. has supplied bulldozers and excavators—machines never seen here before—which are being used along with other Soviet technology to dredge Victoria harbour, build a tourist complex, a sports centre and a swimming pool for children. What is most appreciated here is not only the work of the Soviet people but the fact that they are instructing the Seychellois in building trades and are helping to form a body of home-grown personnel. The first group of young people have already received their certificates.

A photograph in the local paper Nation that caught my eye shows the Soviet ambassador presenting the National Development Minister with a bulky volume containing the results of the work of Soviet oceanographic expeditions. At the request of the Seychelles authorities, scientists from the Far Eastern Centre of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences have explored the energy resources in the seas that wash the islands. They have concluded that it would be possible to build power stations in this part of the Indian Ocean using the difference in water temperatures at various depths.

You can hear Russian spoken at Seychelles polytechnical college. The credit for this goes to Victor Tatarinov, a teacher from Kiev. Among his diligent pupils are not only students, but also civil servants, secondary school teachers and ship's mechanics. One of them, Susan Pierre-Louis, proudly showed me a bronze medal she won at the fifth international competition in the Russian language for school students held in Moscow.

Schoolchildren.

No Longer an "Ocean Casino"

The Seychelles is a peaceful country. Its people are particularly worried about the situation in the Indian Ocean. The republic's government consistently supports the idea of turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace, dismantling all foreign military bases in the area and, of course, rejects the idea of having such bases on its own territory.

This progressive, peace-loving policy does not suit everyone. The U.S., South Africa and Britain have openly challenged the independent foreign policy pursued by the republic. Here is a brief résumé of the subversive acts against the people of the Seychelles staged by the Western and South African special services after the ignominious failure of the attempted invasion of the Island of Mahé by a band of mercenaries in November 1981.

August 1982. South African intelligence agents attempted to provoke a mutiny by an army garrison.

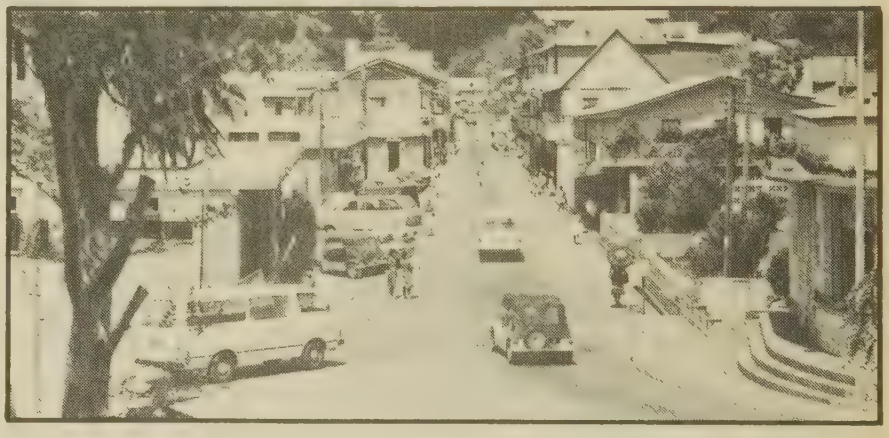
December 1983. Another plot to overthrow the René government exposed on South African territory.

September 1984. Internal opposition fomented by clerics tried to incite young people to anti-government action. The attempt was snuffed out in a matter of hours.

The source of most of these provocations is London where the self-styled Seychellois National Movement has its headquarters. It represents but a handful of capitalist émigrés whose avowed aim is to restore the Mancham regime on the islands. The local press ironically observed that it would be a good idea for the British government to give them work so that they would have something useful to do and let other people alone.

Needless to say, anti-Seychelles groups could not be active in the West without the approval of imperialist circles. Neocolonialists are casting a covetous eye on the strategically important island republic and the vast economic resources of the seas around it. Apparently, it is not just reactionary émigrés who dream of the Seychelles as an "ocean casino." Their backers periodically renew attempts to blackmail the republic, they threaten to reduce the flow of tourists by cancelling a couple of air flights from Europe.

With all these dangers in mind the government has created the national defence forces. The Progressive Front is calling on the people to be vigilant and to strengthen unity. If we are together nothing can shake the edifice we are erecting, is a recurrent motif in René's speeches.



A street in Victoria.

The strains of the sega, a popular dance, is wafted over the island. I learned to recognize the beat within two days of my arrival. The bouncy, catchy tune makes you want to clap your hands or stamp your feet in time. I witnessed a typical episode that would have been unthinkable in Europe. Waitresses at a seaside restaurant, having served all their customers, put down their trays and started dancing as soon as the band began to play the sega. The customers joined in.

The people of the Seychelles are fun-loving and easy-going. But this does not prevent them from following with determination the road they have chosen to put an end to the exploitation of man by man.

G. GABRIELIAN
TASS Correspondent,
exclusive for New Times

Victoria

Photos by Y. Korolyov and TASS

TAKING UP A POINT

I closely followed press reports on the accident at the Chernobyl atomic power station. My question is: haven't scientists been too hasty in going ahead with building power plants on a mass scale without ensuring the 100 per cent safety of the environment and population! Isn't it better not to use a source of energy which is fraught with such grave risks! What do you think!

Samuel FROST
businessman, U.S.A.

VILLEN LYUSTIBERG, a Novosti Press Agency science writer, replies:

The only answer to the question of whether atomic power should be left alone is, Mr Frost, I think, that it should not.

My first argument may seem too abstract, borrowed from the realm of ethics and philosophy: atomic energy was discovered and put to use, so it is an objective reality, and there has been no precedent in history for abandoning a technology once it has been acquired.

Furthermore, the conviction in the Soviet Union is that the use of atomic energy calls not only for high technological standards but also for a new mental approach and a new morality. That is why very high safety standards are set for atomic reactors in our country. Incidentally, these reactors are as reliable as any of those used worldwide, as experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have concluded. Yet even technology tested over and over again can sometimes fail, as was illustrated by the Challenger disaster, the crashes of the Titan, Delta and Ariane rockets, and accidents at atomic power stations. As many as 151 accidents at atomic power stations involving the release of radioactive substances occurred in 14 countries between 1971 and 1984. The latest of these happened in West Germany last May and in Japan last June.

Let us now consider the economic aspect of atomic power. Your question seems to suggest one way out: we have only to go back to "conventional" energy sources — and the danger will disappear automatically. Yet it is not as simple as that. The power we use comes in two forms, so to speak. One, which constitutes an infinitesimal proportion of the total, provides our daily comforts but the other, consumed by industry, is immense.

Up to the second half of our century man was using energy "stored" in fuel, such as firewood, coal, peat and subsequently natural gas, or gravitational energy, pent up in river currents (hydropower). In the early 1970s, however, the prospect of the rapid depletion of fuel resources stared mankind full in the face. Oil extracted from conventional wells, according to some estimates, will last man a mere 60 years, gas 75 and coal 350 years. As for hydropower stations, they account for a mere five per cent of the world's energy generation.

"Alternative" energy sources (such as the direct conversion of solar or wind energy into electricity) are used already today to meet communal needs. Solar batteries for country houses and electric "windmills" are produced. Yet they cannot meet the needs of modern industry: the energy generated by them is far from sufficient. Solar batteries for a power plant with a capacity of 1,000 kw will sprawl over an area of about a square kilometre!

It is therefore clear that man has no viable means of meeting his energy requirements other than nuclear power. Meanwhile, stocks of uranium "fuel" can last up to 30,000 years! That is why atomic power engineering has already made such progress. As many as 374 nuclear reactors with an aggregate capacity of almost 250 million kw were in operation in 26 countries in 1985. They account for 19, 65, 31 and almost 11 per cent of the total power output in Britain, France, West Germany and the Soviet Union, respectively. The Leningrad atomic power station generated 28.5 billion kilowatt hours of electricity in 1985; it would have taken at least 200,000 railway cars of coal to produce as much power at a thermal power plant.

Theoretically, there are other ways of obtaining energy, among them the thermonuclear fusion of the hydrogen isotopes deuterium and tritium (provided a technology is devised to slow down and stabilize the fusion process). This method is free from the drawbacks intrinsic to existing nuclear power plants. Thermonuclear power units produce almost no radioactive waste and the world's oceans contain more deuterium than there are uranium reserves on the planet. Yet the difficulties involved in making controlled thermonuclear fusion a reality have proved more serious than expected.

The decision was taken at the summit meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and President Reagan in Geneva in November 1985 jointly to call upon a number of other countries for cooperation in the field of thermonuclear fusion. Both leaders said that the project offered mankind virtually an inexhaustible energy source. It is to be regretted that the U.S. Administration has left this decision on paper.

As for safety measures, Mikhail Gorbachev proposed in one of his recent statements that an international regime for the safe development of nuclear power industry be worked out through close cooperation between all states using atomic power. A system of prompt release of information about accidents and failures at atomic power stations could be organized under such a regime, especially in cases of radiation leaks. The proposal was endorsed at the June session of the IAEA Board of Governors.

I would like to say in conclusion that what we should fear are nuclear weapons rather than atomic power stations. The effects of an accident at an atomic power station, which operates under strict round-the-clock supervision, can be neutralized even in the worst of cases, but nuclear weapons will spare no one. Our only choice is a total ban on nuclear weapons, and the Soviet Union has proposed this on more than one occasion.

■

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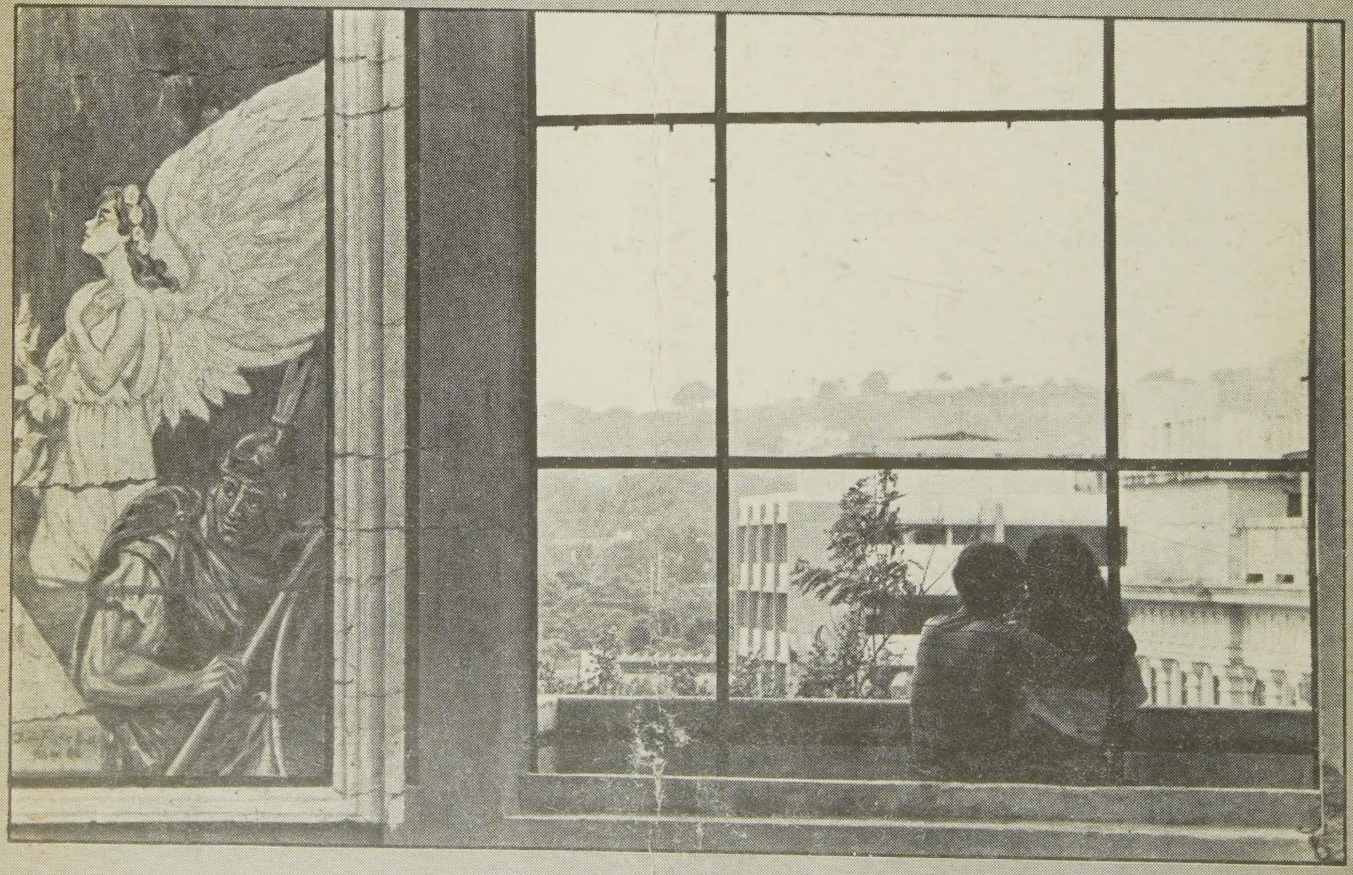

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